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Ward Just on Politics

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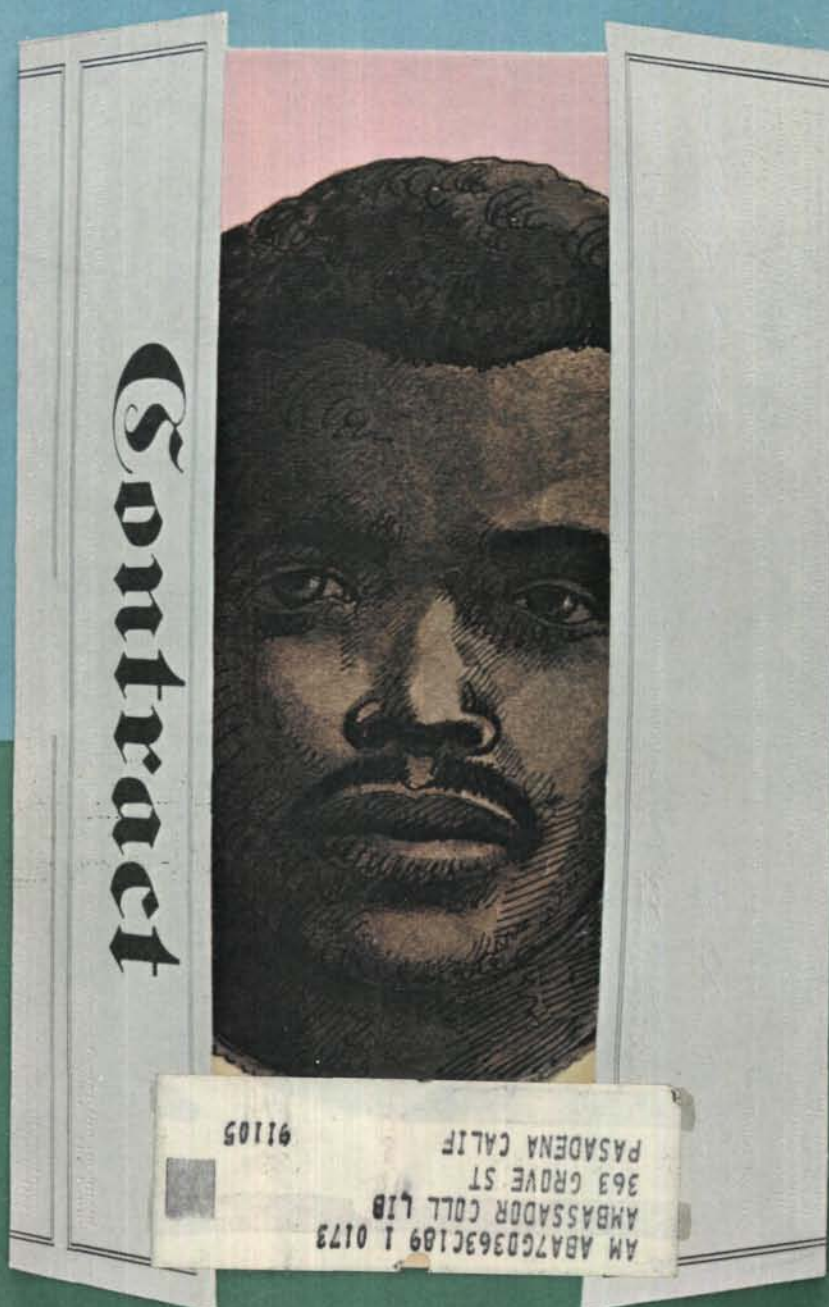
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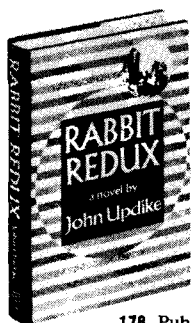
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by
James Alan McPherson

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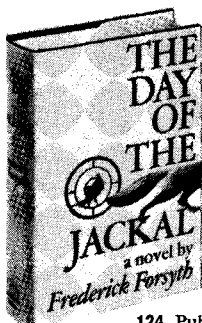


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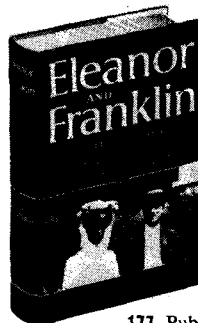
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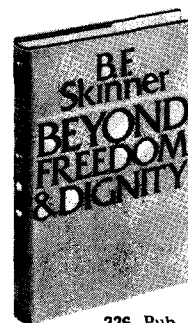
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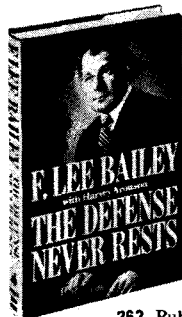
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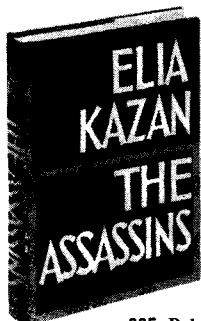


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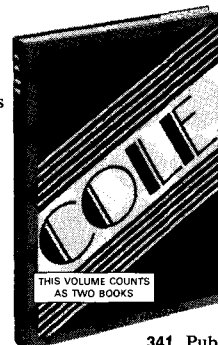
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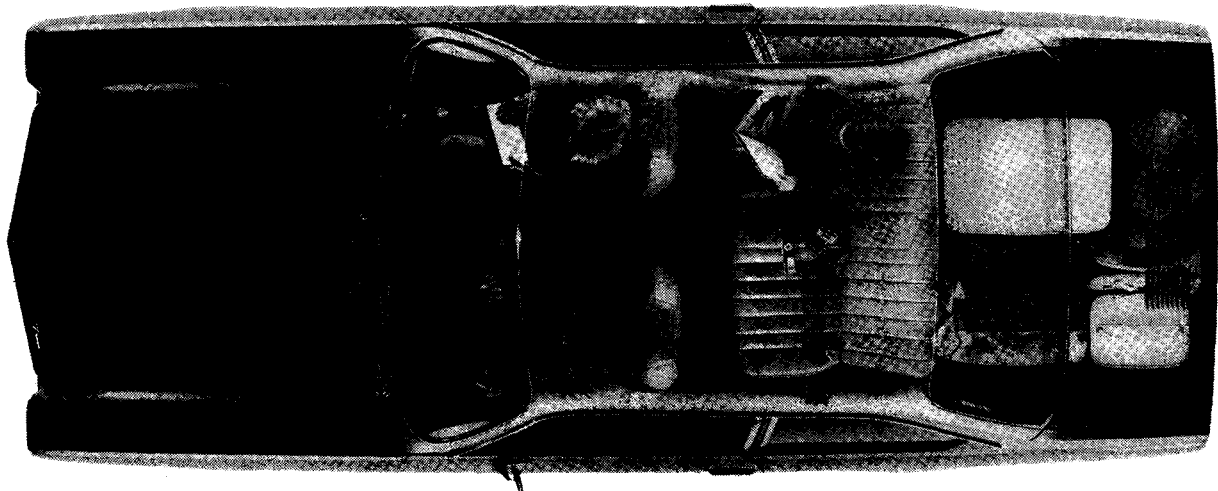
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THE EDITOR'S PAGE

In the February, 1969, issue, one of our frequent contributors wrote in an article entitled *Nixon and China—Time to Talk*: “Could anything be more bizarre than a Nixon-Mao summit? Yet considerably less bizarre, indeed almost plausible, would be a meeting between Nixon and Chou En-lai, two of the most skilled practitioners of political survival in the post-war world.”

The author was James C. Thomson, Jr. Mr. Thomson's surmise was certainly a wise one, and just two years after his article appeared, he was invited to analyze the Nixon visit to China for a nationwide audience as a special commentator for ABC. At the same time another *Atlantic* author and an associate of Mr. Thomson's at Harvard, Ross Terrill, was serving in the same capacity for CBS Television. We apologize to NBC for not having provided them as well with a China expert, but this is a small organization and we have to keep a few troops at home.

Mr. Terrill, incidentally, continues to harvest praise and honors for his two big articles on China, *The 800,000,000* (November and January, see page 129). The White House let it be known that the articles were among the primary briefing material laid before President Nixon for his Peking journey, and the articles won, from Long Island University, the prestigious George Polk Award for magazine reporting.

* * *



James Alan McPherson

People in many big cities will be watching the outcome of the lawsuits discussed in this month's feature article, the story of how 3500 black Chicago home buyers organized the Contract Buyers League in Chicago and set out to assure that “a dollar in the hands of a black man must have the same economic power as a dollar in the hands of a white man.” James Alan McPherson, an *Atlantic* contributing editor, commuted between his home in Berke-

ley and Chicago for eight months to research and write the story of how poor people who wanted to own their own homes banded together to persuade the courts to judge real estate practices—and practitioners—that for years have cost big-city blacks millions of dollars in interest and other charges. Mr. McPherson's article is a suspense story of sorts, for just as it went to press the first of two big suits brought by the Contract Buyers League was called to trial for March 6. In several other big cities, blacks have already instituted or are poised to institute similar suits against white realtors. The Chicago case will mean a great deal to them.

Counting his short stories and previous articles, this makes the eighth *Atlantic* appearance of James Alan McPherson. It is the first for the other McPherson on this month's table of contents. Harry McPherson (page 39) tells about working and writing for a President, specifically LBJ. He served him for four years in the Senate and then, after an interlude of working for President Kennedy, for another four years in the White House. The article is taken from his forthcoming book, *A Political Education*.



Harry McPherson

The two McPhersons have things in common. Both are Southerners—JAM from Savannah, Georgia, HM from Tyler, Texas. Both went from Southern colleges (JAM from Morris Brown, HM from Sewanee) to Northern universities (JAM to Harvard, HM to Columbia), and both became lawyers. James McPherson has put the law aside to become one of the most talented young writers on the scene. Harry McPherson wanted to be a poet but was persuaded by his father to study something more likely to earn him a living. He now practices law in Washington.

One of these days McPherson should meet McPherson.

Robert Manning

NOTHING IS FREE

Uncontrolled freedom destroys itself. Even our free enterprise system needs regulations to keep it functioning.

The fact is several facets of our economy have been government-regulated for many years...to the advantage of our people and our economy. Case in point, our transportation system...highway, railroad, air, water and pipeline. Even with its current problems, it's still far and away the best in the world, the most flexible, the most available.

Our System Works

In the United States, transportation has been effective as a privately-owned part of the total structure because of ground rules tailored to meet the special requirements of the industry and the public. Every manufacturer, every shipper of goods has ready access to effective transportation at fair and competitive rates.

Within this framework, our country has achieved an unprecedented free flow of goods and people, swift

and economical, throughout the country and even throughout the world.

Our current system of transportation regulations...frequently amended through the years to keep pace with a growing America...has served all of us well. To suggest that this system be abandoned or that it be subjected to drastic surgery is to invite serious consequences.

The present system prevents discrimination in rates or service against individuals, communities and shippers alike. That's important to every shipper, to

every community, to every consumer.

Regulation Provides Stability

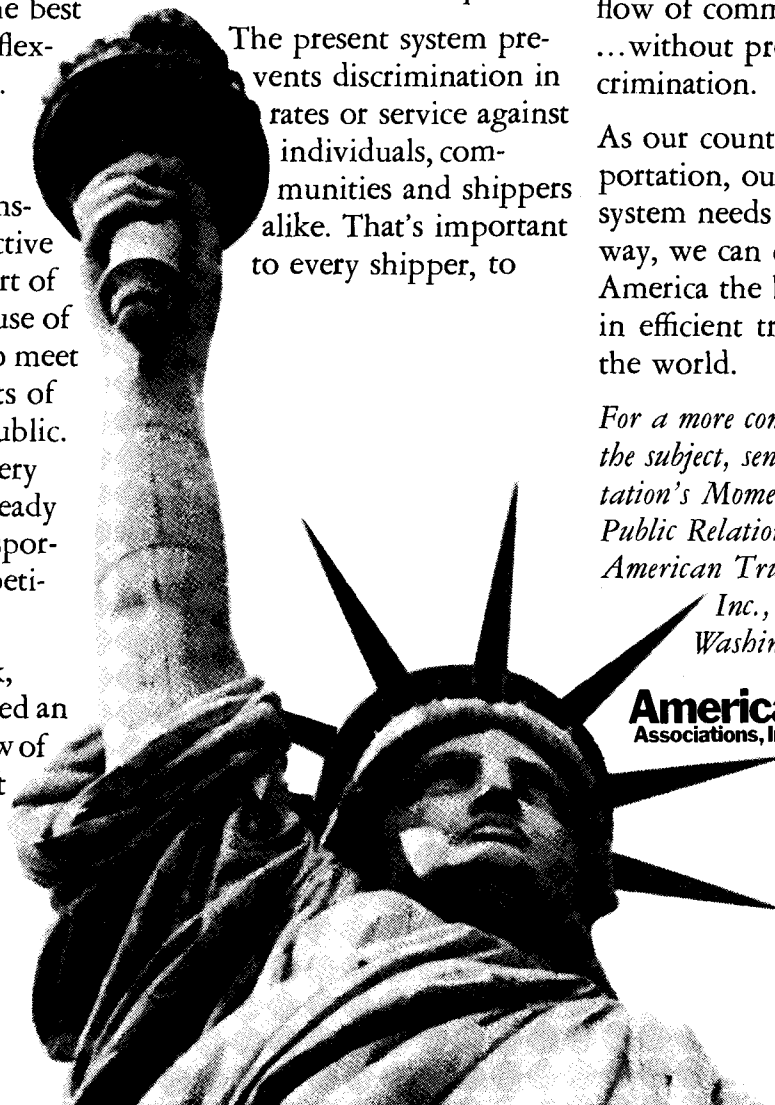
The trucking industry and its competitive counterparts are semi-public utilities. They require the regulation necessary to any industry vital to the public good. This is the element that provides stability to the flow of commerce...everywhere...without prejudice or discrimination.

As our country needs transportation, our transportation system needs regulation. That way, we can continue to offer America the biggest bargain in efficient transportation in the world.

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REPORTS & COMMENT

CAMPAIGNING

I. Michigan

AN OUTSIDER'S ACCOUNT OF HUBERT HUMPHREY'S DAY IN DETROIT. THE PERSISTENCE OF MEMORY.

His plane was late. Half a day late he came to the press conference, cheerful, confident, his campaigner's face rosy and unlined. He spoke of good Democrats, labor unions, the necessity for unity, the perfidious Republicans. He jogged their memories, and the lady politician approved: "He was always there when we needed him. When the party had no money and we needed somebody, he'd fly over from Minnesota in some rickety plane and speak as the fundraiser. And take payment later, whenever we could arrange it. Affection is the word for it. He has a lot of friends in this state, and a lot of people want to say the hell with their heads and go with their hearts. There's just . . . an *ache* to say, 'Let's not be practical, let's go for him.'"

Sentiment, and something more. Hubert Humphrey is reliable, a known quantity, a *given* in a time of complex equations. The ache is there, not severe but deep in places. In Michigan, Edmund Muskie has secured the important endorsements (Senator Philip Hart and the UAW president, Leonard Woodcock), but there's a reluctance to go all the way with him. They're not sure that Muskie, unlike Humphrey, has it in his guts, and in this state that's a defect; they like messiahs here, from Walter Reuther to Soapy Williams to George Romney. More specifically, the caution proceeds from the half-

fear, half-hope that Ted Kennedy will be drafted and nominated in July at Miami Beach. In Lansing, a Democratic official stated the fear: "I am convinced that someone will kill the son of a bitch. There are too many crazies out there. If nominated, he'll lose or be killed." Coleman Young, the black Democratic minority leader in the state Senate, voices the hope: "If nominated he'd win, and I won't believe he's out of it until he tells me *personally*. His own voice. In person." So part of Muskie's problem is the presence of Kennedy. The other part, and the most important, is his own style, something statuesque. Wooden, Abe Lincoln at dusk, Muskie is too reserved and stiff and inaccessible to the arms-around-the-shoulder shop stewards and labor skates. Why then is Muskie leading Humphrey, the man who was always there in Cadillac Square when the party needed him? "We don't think Hubert can win. It's as simple as that."

But it isn't. In Michigan it's not only that they think Humphrey can't beat Nixon. They think he looks like a loser, period. They theorize that this is so (and here one speaks of a style, a "perception," as they will tell you endlessly) less because of his 1968 defeat than because of what went before, the successive and sly humiliations in Lyndon Johnson's White House. It is a curiosity that his campaign manner seems even more anachronistic than Richard Nixon's. It sticks like a bone in the throat—the rapid-fire patter, the locutions, the debater's weapons. Off base in 1972, wide of the mark—wherever the mark is, and that's part of the problem. *Doesn't he know that there are no certainties?* In any event, Humphrey is

liked, *well* liked, out there on the stump with a tap dance and a promise. And dye in his hair.

The dye job is embarrassing, and one wonders why he felt compelled to have it done. "A man with a little gray in his hair" is an old and honorable axiom in American politics, particularly presidential politics. There's no gray in Humphrey's hair now, as there was in 1968; it is a full, dull brown. When he came to Detroit to meet with his constituency—the unions and the blacks—the dye job was visible, a cordovan shine under television's lights. And he still could not elude the shadow of Lyndon Johnson. He humorlessly equivocated in answering reporters' questions: Do you want Lyndon's help in the campaign? And what was interesting was not that he equivocated (everyone does that) but that at this late date he felt obliged to equivocate on that subject. One caught an echo of Richard Nixon responding to questions about the Hughes Tool loan.

He met with labor union leaders later, all of them crowded into a small room at the Sheraton-Cadillac, warm drinks in their fists, pressed close up to HHH at the podium, microphones, lights, cameras. Straightaway he made another remark with the resonance of the President (is there some perverse law in our politics that requires a loser to adopt the psychology of the man who defeated him, viz. Nixon's occasional Kennedy imitations?). Humphrey was talking about the campaign fund check-off bill, and criticizing Nixon for threatening a veto—"although it was right, from his point of view, to do it," the Senator said. The echo was explicit. Then he began to roll, the phrases moving

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You will find our Gamay Noir most reasonably priced at about \$2.25 a bottle. Should your wine merchant fail to have it in stock, write to me.

Brother Timothy F.S.C.

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CAMPAIGNING

rapidly, currents in a great river.

"So, my labor friends, union organizations are being threatened. COPE is being threatened from the highest offices in the land. The federal judges they've appointed, *which I warned you they would* . . . Why do I seek this office? I have a record of performance, ladies and gentlemen, my labor friends. I have never been in a campaign yet where I was not your standard-bearer. You are looking at a man who helped organize unions. I don't walk around scabbing, and I don't go through picket lines, and you know it!" There was applause and cheers at the line, and men turned to one another and smiled and shook their heads. Give 'em hell, a brief recollection of Harry Truman. Some juice. Those were words a man didn't hear very often anymore, and almost never from a national politician. He'd said of the youth vote, don't put your effort exclusively in the colleges, the youth of America was not *in* colleges, it was in factories, *out working*. Then he swung into the Administration, and his voice surged and the words came out even faster, rapid-fire, but still comprehensible. "He promised us that he would keep the dollar sound, and look what happened. He promised us farm prices . . . open government . . . to bring us together . . . and look what happened." Then: "Where are the jobs? Oh, where are the jobs, Mr. President?" His voice rose, almost breaking into a sob. "Housing, hospitals, highways-cityservices-safestreets-daycarecenters. The government, *like an ox*, is stunned in its own indifference! The country needs a President who can stand tall when others are weak, can . . ." But the audience was drifting off now, their drinks stale, taking a limp canapé from the table, moving to the rear of the room. They were whispering among themselves, gesturing with the highball glasses toward the front of the room, where the candidate was. The audience disconnected, moved away. "I'll leave you with one thought," Humphrey said, and five minutes later was still talking. But the audience had definitely disconnected by then.

"He wants it too badly," one of Coleman Young's assistants had said, and Young, nodding, agreed.

THE TRUE INSIDE STORY OF WHY SOME CHILDREN IN MICHIGAN WILL BE DISILLUSIONED AND ALIENATED FROM A POLITICAL PROCESS THAT THREATENS TO EXCLUDE THEM. OR NOT.

The Democratic Party in Michigan rests on the neo-Gothic base of the United Auto Workers and one or two other unions, and shares with its allies in Minnesota and Wisconsin a zeal for social and economic reform (it used to be called liberal doctrine), and a strong party organization which by any realistic standard is "open." It is easily penetrated by minorities, particularly blacks; at the 1968 Democratic convention, Michigan had a higher percentage of black delegates than any other state. A reasonable man would concede the long shadow of the men from Solidarity House—Michigan is not Plato's Republic—because that is where the votes are. Or were. It is true that in 1968 there was no convention delegate under thirty, but under the Michigan system that was simple enough to rectify. If anyone wanted to rectify it. No reasonable man could have any quarrel with *Michigan*—an ornament of the national party, liberal, programmatic Michigan. So it came as something of a shock when Democrats recognized that they would *definitely* have to change their delegate-selection procedures.

This came as the result of the report of the McGovern Commission, which had risen from the shambles of Chicago. The Commission, and its subsequent report, dealt with reform of the delegate-selection process. Rules were established to ensure that the national party would be fully and fairly representative of its actual strength. The Commission appeared to have in mind blacks, the Spanish-speaking, women, Indians, small farmers and migrant workers, and above all, young people. Young men and young women, concerned and embattled young men and young women, who felt—hell, were—shut out of the proceedings at the stockyards. Presumably there were some members of the Commission who felt that middle-aged Polish-American union officials should have a voice as well. Doubtless they did. In any event, the report said in part: "In the last analysis of party strength, we must be willing to decide whether we want a responsive, well-balanced primary or a

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To Know
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CAN IT HELP?

SAME AS ALCOHOL?

WHAT ABOUT ADDICTION?



Biggest Pot Report Filters Some Smoke

By Peter G. Conrad
Washington Bureau Staff Writer

WASHINGTON, D.C. (AP)—A report that the federal government is considering a nationwide ban on the sale of marijuana to the public has been widely reported. The report, which came from a source close to the administration, stated that the ban would be implemented by the end of the year. The source also said that the ban would be part of a broader effort to control the drug trade.

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Decision Nears on Whether to Force People to Integrate in ...

Suburbia

By Mark E. Lane
New York Staff Writer

NEW YORK (AP)—A decision is being made on whether to force people to integrate in the suburbs. The decision, which is being made by the federal government, will determine whether people who live in the suburbs can be forced to integrate with people who live in the city.



Arthur Rupp and his family moved suburban housing. The family, which consists of Arthur, his wife, and their children, moved from the city to the suburbs. They are now living in a new house in a suburban neighborhood.

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Dr. Philip's wife, Mrs. Philip, is a nurse. She is a member of the American Nurses Association. She is also a member of the National Nurses United.

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'We All Felt the Presence of Death'

By Mark E. Lane
New York Staff Writer

NEW YORK (AP)—A group of people who were involved in the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. have said that they all felt the presence of death. The group, which consists of several people who were involved in the assassination, said that they all felt the presence of death at the time of the assassination.



Dr. Philip's wife, Mrs. Philip, is a nurse. She is a member of the American Nurses Association. She is also a member of the National Nurses United.

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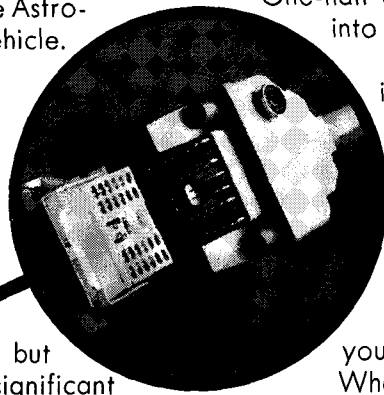
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convention, one of whose main defenses is that it protects the political life of leaders who are afraid to lead." (A definition of terms is in order: that sentence refers to a *state* convention, the mechanism by which many states choose delegates to the national convention.) The Commission's report went on to say, among many, many other things, that delegates should have the opportunity to state *on the ballot* whom they favored. And that that process should begin in the presidential election year. Michigan was in violation on both counts.

The Michigan procedure was this: an initial election (coincident with the state primary) in all 6000 precincts sent delegates to nineteen district conventions. The delegates were uncommitted. The district conventions then sent delegates to a state convention. The state convention selected the delegates to the national convention. The advantages were obvious: in the informal atmosphere of a convention, party leaders could put forward slates of candidates. These would be composed of men and women faithful to the party, party regulars, not sunshine soldiers, but Dedicated Democrats in good times and bad. They were uncommitted and therefore fluid, and by most accounts the process genuinely reflected what the party was about in Michigan. There was one other problem. By custom, the precinct delegates were selected *two years* before the national convention. That was not only a violation of the McGovern Commission's guidelines but a serious political problem in 1972 because in 1971 eighteen-year-olds had been given the vote. Obviously in 1970 there was no way for the teen-agers to participate. Any delegation to the Democratic National Convention must take account of *that*, the kids.

"The kids," mused the Republican state chairman, William McLaughlin, anxiety everywhere on his face. He was discussing the Democratic problem. "The kids are faced with a terrible disillusion. Terrible. They think they're going to have the world, and they're not. It's the same old story."

For this is what happened:

In response to McGovern ("and his goddamned report," as one Democrat put it), the party assembled its own

commission, with a mandate to rewrite the rules. It did, producing a lengthy (but, by the account of one of its authors, memorable) document favoring a classic presidential primary, somewhat along the lines of Wisconsin's. Meeting in convention last year, however, party leaders caused the proposal to fail of adoption. They substituted instead the traditional precinct-district-state apparatus moved up to April, 1972, and modified to permit delegates to write on the ballot whom they favored for the Democratic presidential nomination. It satisfied all the McGovern requirements while still giving the party leaders some measure of control, thanks again to the district and state convention system, which was retained. When the Democratic proposal went before the Michigan legislature last year, it sailed through the Democratic-controlled House but stalled in the Senate. The bill died in the rush toward adjournment in December. The party was thus left with its 1970 delegates, a situation clearly in conflict with the McGovern Commission's guidelines.

Consider now the Republicans' dilemma. They had problems of their own, most of them on the right wing of the party, and had no wish or desire to change anything. The system that had worked so well for the Democrats over the years had worked equally well for the Republicans. The new Democratic proposal looked to be a can of worms, "dangerous," as one party official said later. There was no McGovern Commission staring the Republicans in the face. They were under no obligation to do anything.

"You can see the problem," explained Michael Staebler, a Democratic official and son of the shrewd doyen of Michigan Democrats, Neil Staebler. "Can you picture the scene in Miami Beach? These Southerners criticizing Michigan, challenging the delegation. Challenging *Michigan* for, Jesus, antidemocratic elitist procedures!"

The Democrats saw the problem, but they did very little about it. They waffled most of last year, because there was a compensation of sorts. They could—and, as it turned out, did—accuse the Republicans, particularly the governor, William G. Milliken, of insensitivity to "the kids" who'd received the vote since 1970. If

the Republicans continued their obstructionism there could be no way for the eighteen-to-twenty-year-olds to participate in America's experiment in Democracy. No way. So beginning in December, the Republicans came under very heavy fire, particularly on the campus. In January a liberal-minded Republican state legislator named Michael Dively told the governor that their party was being crucified in East Lansing and Ann Arbor. Like Dively, Milliken is a liberal, and he didn't like what he heard. So in January he collected a group of party pros and told them to come up with something to turn turtle on the Democrats. It had taken the great Democratic Party of Michigan seventeen months to produce its proposal, but the Republicans took just one hour. In mid-January Milliken reversed himself and announced the party's support for a straight winner-take-all presidential primary, delegates to be named by the candidate's agent.

Neat, for in Michigan Richard M. Nixon's agent was William G. Milliken. Very, very neat because it was very, very salable to an electorate fascinated by simplicity. Compared to the labyrinthine Democratic procedures, Milliken's proposal was wonderfully lean and clear-cut. And ingeniously designed to put the Democrats in a hole. Who could object to an election in which you vote for the candidate of your choice? Coleman Young, the Democratic leader in the Senate, described the Republican proposition as "90 percent political, loose, vague, and full of holes." When a politician talks like that, it is obvious that he is in a box.

What to do? In late January the Democrats focused their complaints on the Michigan press. It was the responsibility of the press to sell the Democratic proposal to the public, and expose the Republican sham for what it was. The secretary of state, Richard Austin, was one who took this view. "The Republican thing *sounds* democratic, but it's really not. It has the illusion of the people selecting the delegation, but not the reality. The reality is that the candidate's *agent* selects the delegation. What happens to those delegates if the candidate later withdraws? What happens to Democracy then?" Mr. Austin, a durable black politician of wide and varied experience in the precincts

of Detroit, moaned sadly, "It's back to the old smoke-filled room."

There were several other sides to the Democratic box, the principal one being that it was politically very awkward to support the Republican proposal, since to do so would be to admit that the Democratic plan was unsuitable. Mildred Jeffrey, the Democratic national committeewoman from Michigan, said plainly: "Milliken make a brilliant political maneuver." And there was a serious practical complication: politics aside, the authentic liberals in the party genuinely believed that the Milliken scheme was autocratic and in opposition to the "spirit of McGovern." So at the end of January, that was where the Democrats were. Nowhere. And what was likely to happen? This:

Senator Coleman Young: "The hell with it. We can go two ways. We can deal with the governor and enact two primaries. The Republicans can go with Milliken, and we can go with ours. A nightmare for the county clerks, but possible. Or we can compromise. I would imagine. I *would* imagine that there is some way that we can combine both ideas, their presidential-preferential and our precinct-delegate selection. And I suspect that that is what will happen."

"And?"

"And the odds are that we'll have some kind of election in the spring."

Senator Young was prescient. The Democrats worked out a compromise along the lines he suggested. Indeed, he was one of the architects. At this writing the two parties are attempting to reason together, and optimism is justified. American political journalists are inclined to analyze these events in two ways—to drink, as it were, from two bottles. One holds the notion that in American politics it is the details and procedures that matter. The other insists that only the professionals know or care about the details and that what matters is the "mood" or "tone" of a campaign, elements which in turn determine the attitudes of the electorate. (It is loosely, if not widely, described as the politics of atmosphere.)

How to analyze Michigan and its delegate-selection process. Fact? Or atmosphere? Neither. *None of it matters.* Staebler, Austin, Young, McLaughlin, and a dozen other Michigan politicians of both parties admit that no matter what the proce-

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ture, the delegations will be composed of roughly the same personalities, influenced by the same events no matter how they are selected.

"All of this, the public doesn't really care about it, but the pros do," Mike Staebler said. "Because they care about the party as an institution." The party regulars will find a way to dominate the Michigan delegation; they always have. "What the heck," said the lady, "it's *their* party."

A NEW STYLE AT SOLIDARITY HOUSE. WOODCOCK AND REUTHER.

One prominent Michigan Democrat (they do not like to be quoted on these matters) contends that the essential difference between the late Walter Reuther and his successor, Leonard Woodcock, is ancestry. Woodcock is English, Reuther German; Woodcock, though very smart and tough-minded, is a more gentle personality. Walter Reuther was a shrewd and hard inside man, behind-the-scenes. Woodcock gets out front.

"We could very seldom get Walter to sit at the head table at a Jefferson-Jackson dinner. Well, Leonard will. At the national convention Walter Reuther would take a suite somewhere, and that would be where you'd see him. Leonard plans to be a delegate."

Woodcock has announced his personal support for Edmund Muskie, but the UAW board has not gone along. The board has refused to endorse anyone, preferring to hang back and watch the results of the early primaries. This was done partly in deference to Hubert Humphrey, who has a number of old friends among the UAW leadership. A union official: "Leonard Woodcock came out very early for Muskie, something that Reuther would never do. But Leonard did not try to bring the entire union with him, something that Walter *certainly* would have done."

It is probable that Woodcock is exercising his own brand of new politics, laying his preference on the line, signing up early. Old-line Democrats are exhorting the unions to make unprecedented efforts to turn out the vote in 1972. Humphrey tells them privately that if the workingman hadn't deserted him in Missouri, New

Jersey, and Pennsylvania, he'd be President. They wouldn't have Nixon. Perhaps. But many Democrats in this labor state believe that the "labor vote" is a thing of the past, and has been since Eisenhower. Union membership is far down on the list of loyalties, after race, family, friendships, income, and—according to Walter DeVries, the pollster—which newspaper you read or television news program you watch. There is no question of the Democratic nominee carrying Michigan (Humphrey won by 250,000 votes in 1968, and in Michigan Nixon is less popular now than he was then), but there is a serious question, even in Michigan, how much the union "leadership" has to do with it. Woodcock, out front early without regard for the position of his lieutenants, may be a very modern man indeed.

II. Oregon

WHY GOVERNORS ARE DULLER AND LESS INTERESTING THAN INFANTRY COLONELS OR YALE YOUNGER POETS, EXCEPT TOM MCCALL OF OREGON AND HIS WIFE, AUDREY, WHO ARE MORE INTERESTING THAN EITHER.

McCall is standing in his living room at the governor's house in Salem, a hemorrhage in his fist (a hemorrhage is his special drink, a dash of Clamato juice and four ounces of gin over ice), telling a story. This is his account of the disastrous Republican governors' conference in Sun Valley a year ago when he got into the battle with Agnew. It was the conference at which Agnew lectured the governors for an hour, staring straight at McCall almost every moment, carping at them for criticizing other Republicans, and most particularly for calling into question the Nixon-Agnew victory strategy in the 1970 elections. The radic-lib commentators were in error again, Agnew said, for suggesting that 1970 was a Republican defeat. In reality it was a victory. Gore and Goodell were defeated. McCall was angry at the beginning of Agnew's speech and furious at the end, because there were eleven fewer Republican governors in 1971 than there had been in 1970, partly as a result of this marvelous White House strategy. He exited in a rage to find, who else, Sander Vanocur and his electronic *quadrilla* waiting in the hallway. He went straight to Vanocur,

who was very excited, knowing the governor's reputation for candor. "He had the damned microphone in my adenoids," McCall said. But Vanocur caught McCall calling the Agnew analysis an "ignorant, rotten little speech."

Next day the governors met again, and there was a small, strained silence while the Vice President turned to McCall and inquired, almost gently: "Tom, you couldn't have said what the papers said you said. You couldn't've, Tom. You could not have said it . . ."

McCall, deadpan, replied: "Ted, I don't think I used the word 'rotten.'" He thought it was a reasonably funny line, given the standards of Republican governors' conferences, and began to laugh. But no one else did. The 1971 survivors, Reagan, Holton, Ogilvie, Kirk, and the rest of them, just sat and looked at their hands.

There followed something of a shouting match, during which Agnew uttered one of his memorable lines. He wondered why—*why?*—every politician in America felt obliged to go around "patting Sandy Vanocur on the ass just to get on the boob tube." Unanswerable.

Then Reagan stood and piously began to speak of the "Eleventh Commandment" of the Republican Party in California: "Thou shalt not speak ill of another Republican."

"Except," and McCall is on his feet now, fixing another hemorrhage, striding around the living room, "that it doesn't apply if Reagan wants to give it to John Lindsay or somebody else wants to give it to Nelson. It doesn't apply to the left-wingers, only to the right."

Ron Schmidt, McCall's press secretary, nodded and disclosed that the staff had devised a new method for silencing the governor. "We got an idea that whoever was with him would step on his foot when he got out of line." The governor is smiling hugely at this, enjoying the joke. "So the last time he was out he said something that made every newspaper and television station in the West, and I asked the guy who was with him what went wrong, and he said all the time he was talking McCall was standing on *his* foot."

McCall is a wonderful raconteur, speaking in an outrageous Back Bay accent (a legacy from his family—his

grandfather was governor of Massachusetts—and particularly his eighty-two-year-old mother, who is something of a legend in Oregon, even more outspoken than her son, if that is possible, and it probably isn't). all rolling "rrr's" and broad "aaa's." Very big—six-four and well muscled—an outdoorsman, and an unusually fine and capable governor. "I'll tell you why I'm a good governor," he said, and proceeded to explain what he'd done to clean up the state's lakes and streams and air and require industries to establish their own environmental controls. One of his methods was ingenious: he cut off the funds of the Oregon Industrial Development Commission.

The press secretary had left the room to make a reservation at a restaurant outside of Salem. He returned chuckling, nodding at the governor.

"Boy, you have a hell of a lot of clout around here."

"What do you mean?" the governor asked.

"I called up Reuben at the Colonial House, and he said they didn't have any room. We'd have to wait in the lounge."

The company laughed at that, a very Oregon situation, no insolence of office in Salem. One of the men present was from the East. "You know, in New York some guy would be on the phone to '21' on the busiest night of the year and say, 'The governor will be there in three minutes with a party of twelve,' and *I'll tell you*, they'd find room if they had to buy the building next door to do it."

McCall was smiling and nodding. "Well, what's wrong with the lounge?"

So three hours later, after an uproarious steak dinner, the governor's party made its way to the door of the restaurant. Audrey McCall sat on a chair in the foyer, smiling, because Tom had to shake hands with the customers on the way out. It was a sometime thing; sometimes he did, sometimes he didn't. Tonight he felt like it. He stopped by the table of a young sailor having a quiet dinner with his girl, his bulk dwarfing the boy, the girl, and the table. Then he moved to a party of six women, and joked and laughed with them for five minutes. People came and went. He is so open and gregarious and so obviously enjoying himself that people respond,

and in a second he had the customers laughing and cracking jokes. In fifteen minutes he was at the door, towering over everyone, looking around like a general inspecting the troops. Satisfied that he'd said hello to everyone in sight, he then prepared to leave. But before he did he leaned down and kissed Audrey, and put his hand on her shoulder. She'd been waiting patiently.

"I'm sorry we stayed so long, sweetheart," he said, and arm in arm they walked out the door.

AT LEWIS AND CLARK COLLEGE, A GOOD NIGHT FOR McGOVERN.

Blaine Whipple thought he would try out a new speech at Lewis and Clark. It was a war speech, and his steering committee wanted him to stay away from the war, but Whipple was determined to go through with it. He is George McGovern's chairman in Oregon. "Well, we'll see how it goes. They don't want me to talk about the war, but I will. It's important."

Whipple had an idea that he could link the war in Vietnam with the plight of the aged in the United States. Both were essentially environmental issues, "the destruction of Indochina and the destruction of much of our elderly population . . . two related issues." He spoke of defoliation and ecological damage in the war zone, and the innocent civilians caught in cross fire, ". . . pregnant and lactating women . . . the policies of the United States military are destroying the culture of South Vietnam." The totality of it was a monstrous legacy, Whipple said, and the way to end it was "immediate and permanent cessation of warfare as proposed by George McGovern."

Thirty-five students in the auditorium sat quietly through this. Whipple is very low key, almost genteel in his approach. "As students you spend little or no time thinking of the fears faced by the nation's elderly people. Let us share a brief interlude with an elderly woman." Whipple catalogued the problems of the elderly poor, his argument lacerating the indifferent, wealthy society that permits it. He ended his speech with the suggestion that Americans were pilgrims, wayfarers. "George McGovern sees us traveling together, passengers on a little spacecraft . . ."

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months the Blaine Whipples of politics will be speaking those words or words like them in college auditoriums, American Legion halls, civic centers, street corners, the front parlors of houses, high school gymnasiums, to forty people or fifty, looking into rows of faces from behind lecterns. They will hope to connect, to rouse a citizen to commit himself. To work. Whipple will repeat his litany a hundred times before the Oregon primary, trying to find the issue, or the combination of issues, that will ignite and inspire.

After the speech at Lewis and Clark, there were a few desultory questions, and then Whipple left, pleased with the meeting. A good meeting, he said, "I signed up eight people. Of course it's a lot different from 1968. In 1968, we had runaway crowds. In that year there would have been a thousand kids in the audience."

ON MISSING MARTYRDOM AT REED COLLEGE.

On a Saturday afternoon at the president's house at Reed College in Portland, fifteen students came to talk about their political views. They were extremely interesting and intelligent students, but turned off about politics. There is a new fad at Reed: children's books—Babar, Dr. Seuss, a few others.

Provoke the students, and they will talk about issues, but with no hope of change or improvement. Any politician who hopes for an outpouring of support at Reed had best measure up to quite a high standard. No politician of my acquaintance could manage it. But the students were doing some hard thinking on a lot of other issues, among them the issue of amnesty. One of them said: "If you have amnesty, you really defeat the purpose, you know? I mean, the whole purpose is to commit yourself to an action and then pay the price. If there's amnesty. . ."

"You miss the martyrdom, right?" another student asked.

"Right."

Toward the end of the afternoon, one of the girls, a shock trooper in the old days—Brooklyn College, Columbia, marches here, sit-ins there, demos against the war, against pov-

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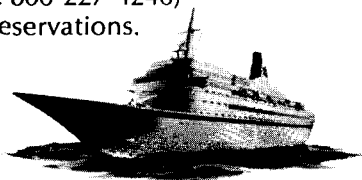
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erty, red-necks, college administrations, the munitions-makers—talked about how personally exhausting the Movement was, when everything that you did became a political act, when you believed that in the corporate state everything was poisonous. You did not shop at Safeway because of “the situation with the migrant workers in Southern California” or buy your gasoline from Union Oil because of the great spill. You were very careful to be entirely honest in your actions, and to think through their political consequences. One day about a year ago the girl read an account of yet another atrocity in Vietnam and retired to her room and did not move much for six weeks. She kept the lights off in the room. I could not tell where this girl was “at” right now. But she told her story with humor and good cheer and no melodrama. I had the feeling that wherever she was now, it was a better place than where she had been.

III. Iowa

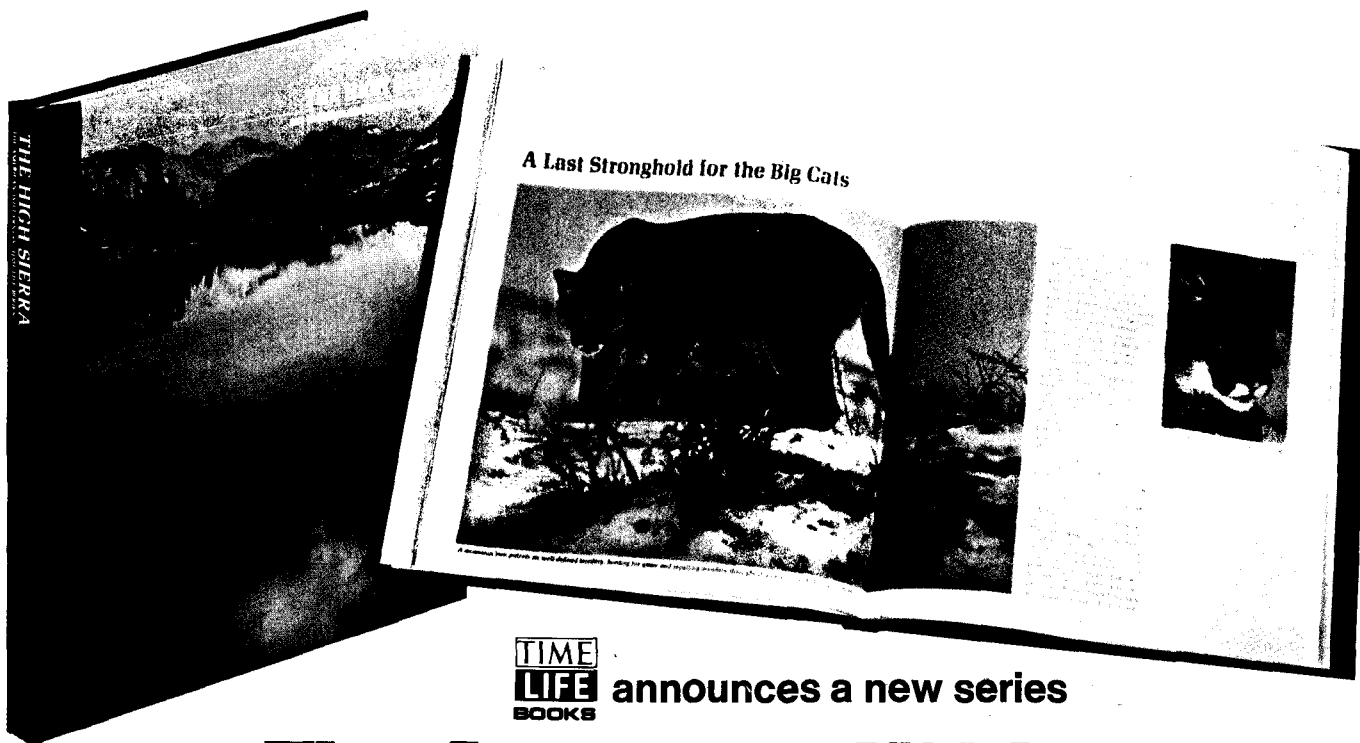
THE MOOD IN IOWA. SOME FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS GET TOGETHER TO ELECT CONVENTION DELEGATES IN THE ELKS' CLUB AT CRESTON. THE VALUE OF INTERESTING TELEPHONE CALLS.

Iowa is generally thought to be a Republican state, but the Democratic Party is vigorous, powerful, and liberal. Senator Harold Hughes (though his 1971 beard and belief in ESP have cost him some votes in this straight state) is the most influential politician around, and young Congressmen Neal Smith and John Culver have given the state a strong congressional delegation. Politically it is not especially well organized; the party organizations here bear no relation to the machinery of Michigan or Illinois. Because the state is still mostly rural and small-town and 98.5 percent white and largely Protestant, it will probably be secure for Nixon in November. If it is not (and there are some interesting counterarguments), the President is in serious political trouble.

On January 24, the Democratic Party held its neighborhood caucuses—2600 of them, all over the state. It was the first test for Muskie,

Humphrey, McGovern, and McCarthy, and the national press turned out in battalion strength: two television crews from CBS, one each from NBC, ABC, and Public Television, two correspondents from the New York Times, and one each from the Washington Post, Time, Newsweek, and a few other newspapers and magazines, plus one scholar from the Brookings Institution in Washington. (One mentions this at all to emphasize the public nature of the proceedings, although one precinct chairman in Des Moines deserves kudos for barring the cameras from his living room: “We are running an election, not a goddamned television spectacular,” he told the networks, reasoning that the participants would be self-conscious under klieg lights and zoom lenses.) This test in Iowa was not a Gallup Poll or a newspaperman's shopping center survey or Eric Sevareid's gut reaction, or any of the other factlets from which the national press assembles its impressions of front-runners. These were real people electing real delegates. The process resembles Michigan's, with the precinct nominees going to ninety-nine county conventions and electing delegates to six district conventions. It all ends with a state convention, at which forty-six men and women are sent to Miami Beach. The possibility of bossism is lower in Iowa than in Michigan (or almost anywhere else) owing both to the nature of the Iowa party and to the procedures themselves. (This is true despite the “steal” of McCarthy delegates, whose forces won the precinct elections in 1968; the steal, if that is what it was, owed more to incompetence than rapine.)

Of course, most Iowa politicians were unhappy with the January primary, with the exception of Hughes, who early in the month moved from McGovern to Muskie. It was too early. Most political people are unwilling to make up their minds at a time when their colleagues in other states are under no obligation to do so. Too many interesting things might happen; a politician finds it convenient to back and fill, delay and wait. Aside from the ideologues who for deep-drawn theoretical reasons are moving with McGovern or McCarthy, the average party worker likes to sit tight. And one is not speaking necessarily, or even primar-



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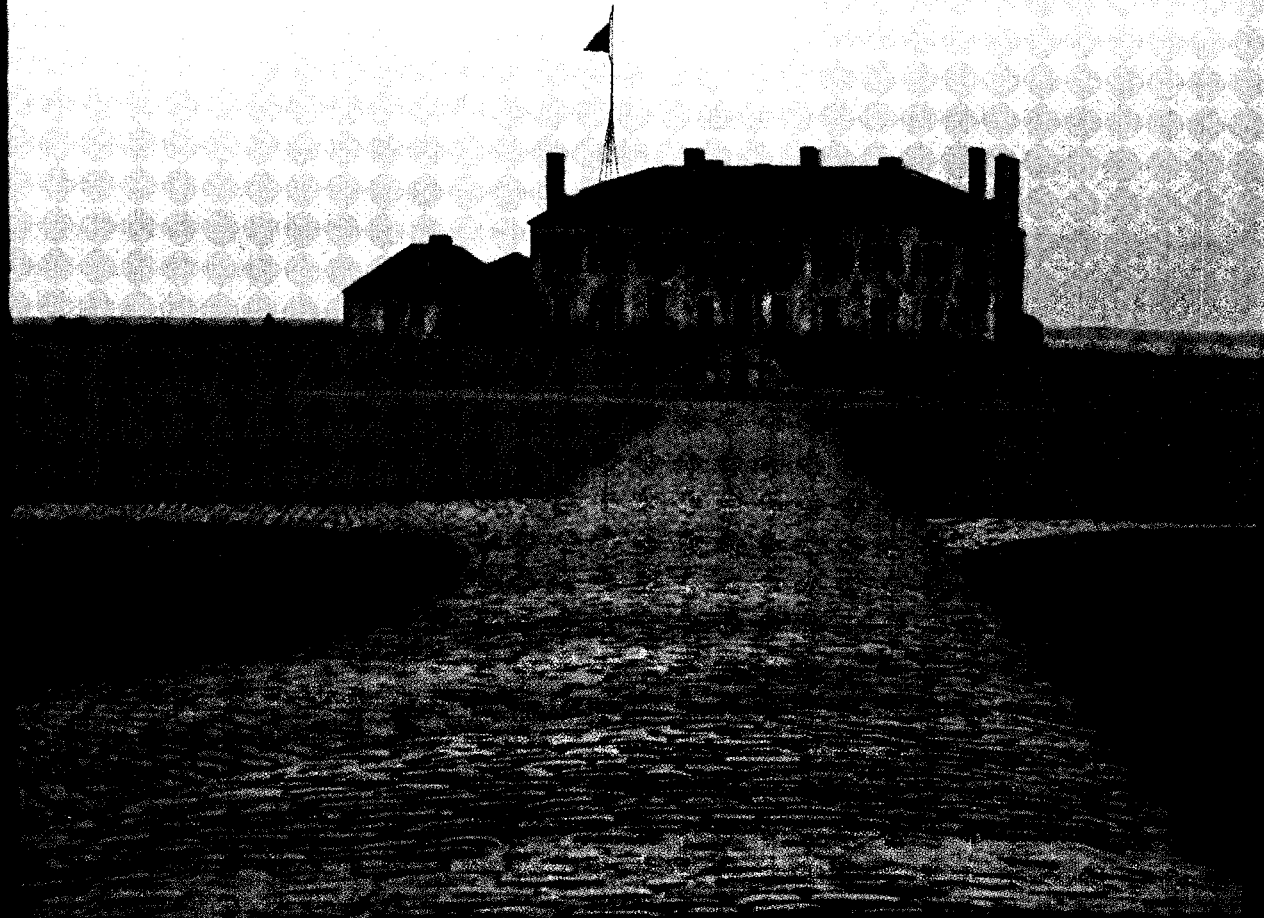
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CAMPAIGNING

ily, of party officials or office-holders, who have serious practical objections to placing themselves in positions of possible reprisal, but simply of people who enjoy the game. Roger Blobaum, a consultant to farm organizations in Iowa and an unsuccessful Democratic candidate for Congress in 1970, states the case neatly: "You commit yourself too soon and you don't get all those interesting telephone calls."

The Polk County (Des Moines) and AFL-CIO Democrats were earnestly pressing for uncommitted slates on January 24. They were waiting for the voice of a turtle out there in the countryside, a McGovern surge (two days before the election, he stood 3 percent in the Gallup Poll, an ideal position because he had nowhere to go but up, which he subsequently did), a Muskie gaffe, or—dreaming—an indication that Ted Kennedy was preparing a lightning coup. One's sense of it was that "uncommitted" Iowa Democrats wanted to see Ed Muskie move and move fast, get up front and stay there and bring the party in behind him. They wanted a reason to be enthusiastic. At any event, in Polk County about one half of those elected were, indeed, uncommitted. And roughly the same percentage held true statewide. Extrapolating the percentages, it would mean that Iowa would send to Miami Beach eighteen Muskie delegates, eighteen uncommitted delegates, and ten McGovern delegates. Humphrey and McCarthy together gathered less than 4 percent of the vote, and no delegates at all.

The urge to stand uncommitted was as pronounced in rural districts as it was in Des Moines. Union County Democrats elected thirty-seven delegates to the county convention: five Muskie, one Lindsay, one McGovern, and thirty uncommitted. One of the precinct caucuses was held in the basement of the Elks' Club in Creston, thirteen friends and neighbors who had turned out in subzero weather to elect their delegates. Few of the reform procedures were followed; the meeting was as informal as a bridge game among friends. One man was named a Lindsay delegate because "he was there and we didn't want to exclude him." One other was named a Muskie delegate, a third was slated for McGovern, and three oth-

ers were elected as uncommitted. Under friendly questioning, the six delegates admitted that they would caucus before the county convention and decide what to do. In fact, *all* of them were uncommitted, including the one who said: "I'll tell you right now that if McGovern suddenly said that the farm problem was not important and Don Connell still votes for him, why, we'll *kill* Don." Connell, drinking a cup of coffee and munching on a cookie, only smiled. These are six delegates who could go any way—Muskie, McGovern, Humphrey, McCarthy. Any way except a Kennedy way.

"Not Kennedy," one of them said, "no way."

"Even if drafted and nominated?"

"Oh, well *sure*. If nominated, we'll support him. We do not intend to be suicidal . . . about anything."

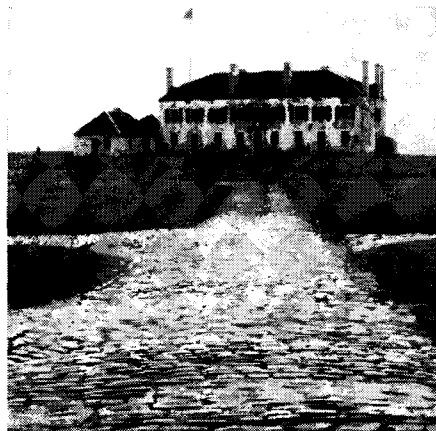
Part of the urge toward caution may be bound up with discontent in the farm belt. "Discontent in the farm belt" is one of the enduring clichés of American politics; the farmers are always angry at whoever is in power, and when Roger Blobaum mentioned it, a friend from out of town assumed he meant falling farm prices. (To a farmer, prices are always falling.)

"No, no," Blobaum said. "It doesn't have anything to do with that. It's the social issue."

"Oh, yes. Drugs, blacks, kids."

"No, goddamnit, I do not mean drugs or blacks or kids. No one in Creston feels threatened by kids. It has to do with the deterioration of small towns, a threat to their way of life. And the corporate farming issue. Earl Butz [Nixon's new Secretary of Agriculture, a corporate farming, "agribusiness" man] is a big issue here. The farmers don't like him. It's more an issue in Montana, the Dakotas, and Nebraska, but it's an issue here, too. Main Street's deteriorating, and a man can't start a small farm anymore. Youngsters are leaving the land. People don't know each other anymore. 'People who know when you're sick and care when you die.'"

That was one of Lyndon Johnson's favorite lines, and it goes to the heart of the problem in rural America. Men and women feel that the corporate state is excluding them, that physical labor counts for very little, that their children are seduced away from the land not by bright lights but by the promise of white collars in a mindless



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bureaucracy. Of course, there is another view. It is that some farmers regard their work as backbreaking and unprofitable, and small-town life as dull and confining, and urge their kids to get off the land and go live.

"Nixon is in serious trouble in Iowa," Blobaum said.

But the issue was there in 1968, and Nixon didn't lose the farm belt. In 1968 he annihilated Hubert Humphrey in Iowa, and Humphrey has been the champion of the small family farm for two decades.

Blobaum smiled, undeterred. "In 1968, you talked to the men and they talked about farm prices, economic issues. They thought Nixon could deal with those. But when you talked to the women, farm wives, all they talked about was this social thing. The women were there before the men. Now the men are there, too."

Blobaum was one of those elected in the Elks' Club as a delegate on the night of January 24. He has old loyalties to Hubert Humphrey, and new ones to Edmund Muskie. But for the moment, until the county conventions and perhaps beyond, he is hanging loose. Wait. See what happens. See how it shakes out. Can Ed Muskie strike sparks? Roger Blobaum is waiting for all those interesting telephone calls before he decides when to jump, and where.

IV. Louisiana

THE SOUTH, RISING.

At the end of January, the week of the President's Vietnam speech, New Orleans was warm and lazy, languid in a damp afternoon. Some difference after Iowa, and its subzero temperatures and Anglo-Saxon temperament and politics frozen in a Northern tradition. Louisiana is loose and unbuttoned, bizarre, slightly mad but not neurotic. We'd come to City Hall to interview the mayor on Democratic prospects in Louisiana, but found ourselves talking instead of the incongruity of Muskie or Humphrey or McGovern stumping Bourbon Street. The look of the men, their accents and their gestures, was all wrong. The sun would hurt their eyes.

Mayor Moon Landrieu is forty-one and an ex-professor at the University of Loyola Law School. He describes

himself as a professional politician, which is accurate enough. A couple of years ago, before he was mayor, a newspaperman asked him a vital question:

"I assume you are for the preservation of Southern traditions and way of life?"

"No," Moon said.

With a good-old-boy manner and a very tough and sardonic mind, Landrieu is waging war against clichés. Some, not all. He has succeeded John Lindsay as chairman of the legislative action committee of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and pronounces himself delighted that Lindsay is in the presidential race: "He'll focus some attention on the cities, which, God knows, they need." He speaks warmly of Henry Maier of Milwaukee and Kevin White of Boston as men who govern well. "It is hard to know, just meeting a mayor, how well he does in his own town, what his particular problems are, and how he deals with them." Be careful not to be seduced by a man's style, he says, and praises Mayor Richard J. Daley. This is a Southern politician vaguely apologizing for a compliment to the *bête noire* of Northern liberals.

Landrieu, Lindsay, and Daley. Three different men operating out of three different traditions in three different cities. Yet when they sit in the same room, talking about urban problems, there is more uniting them than dividing them. More that *should* unite than divide. Or so Landrieu believes.

The clichés of the present are much on his mind. Landrieu is currently fighting with the newspapers and the Civil Service Commission over reform of the Commission's rules of seniority. Patronage is not necessarily a bad thing, and sometimes it is the only thing, if you want to reform a bureaucracy which has become swollen and indifferent and 80 percent white in a city nearly half black. "How can you bring blacks into the government when the rules say that for *this* position a man has to have had so many years in *that* position? To become a supervisor, so much time as a deputy supervisor. A black man can't gain entry."

In time, Landrieu will announce his support for one of the Democratic candidates for President, probably Muskie. With Hale Boggs and F. Edward Hébert in the House, and Allen

Ellender and Russell Long in the Senate, it is important to Landrieu as mayor of New Orleans that there be a Democrat in the White House. The congressional delegation is so strong that with White House backing the city could truly cash in on federal projects, grants in aid, money. But the city's financial apparatus is so eccentric that Landrieu has been forced to go to a bond issue referendum to buy half a dozen fire trucks. If the bond issue fails, the city's imperiled.

Landrieu, with most other Louisiana politicians, is preoccupied with his local problems. As a professional pol, he will at some point run for something else, although now he talks of his nine children and the difficulties of moving to Washington (if Washington it is) and the distinction between legislator and administrator. "I think this about being mayor: it's something you can feel and touch. You can see the building. Go to Bourbon Street, see the playgrounds. Look around and see the blacks you've brought into government."

The good old boy: "I've got a résumé here from a kid who wants a job. *Magna cum laude*. Not *summa*. Hummm, ummm! How the hell do you get a magna degree at Harvard University?"

The sardonic professional: "They said my staff wrote that letter (a sarcastic, witty reply to a *Times-Picayune* editorial on the civil service furor). Well, I wrote the letter. I'm the smartest guy in this office."

Landrieu does not underestimate his problems. They are difficult, and some of them are packed in ice. A man doesn't reform civil service overnight. The city is dreadfully short of funds, there's more than 6 percent unemployment in the city. New Orleans is not a manufacturing town but a service town, with an inadequate tax base. Education services, health services, run-down neighborhoods, racial tensions—hard problems. But Landrieu is optimistic, and it does not seem an optimism born of desperation. He sees his city as governable, in better shape this year than last, and better still the year after. The bus fare is still at fifteen cents, and the new hospital will get built. Better men are coming into government, Washington and Baton Rouge have lost some of their attraction and glamour. Eventually one got down to

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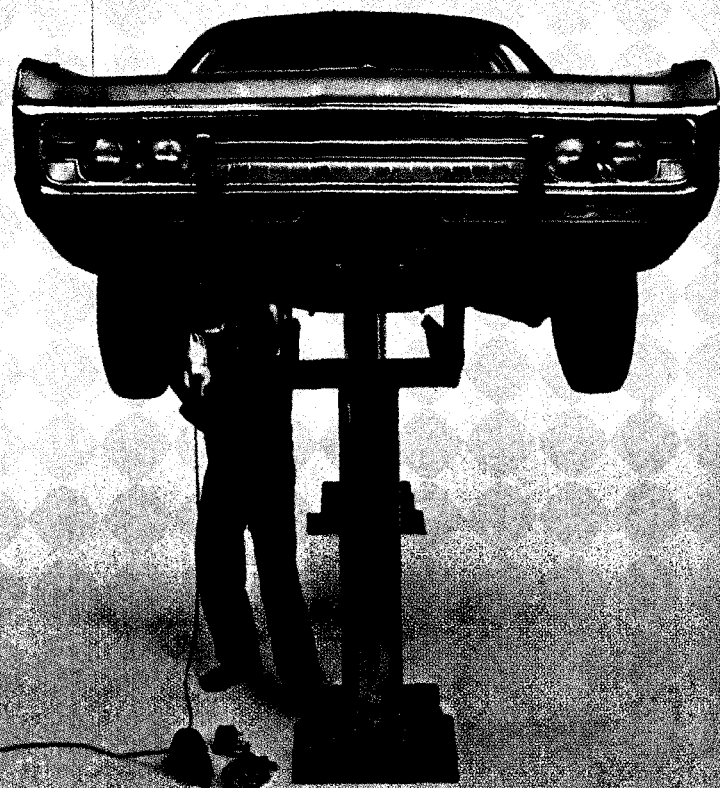
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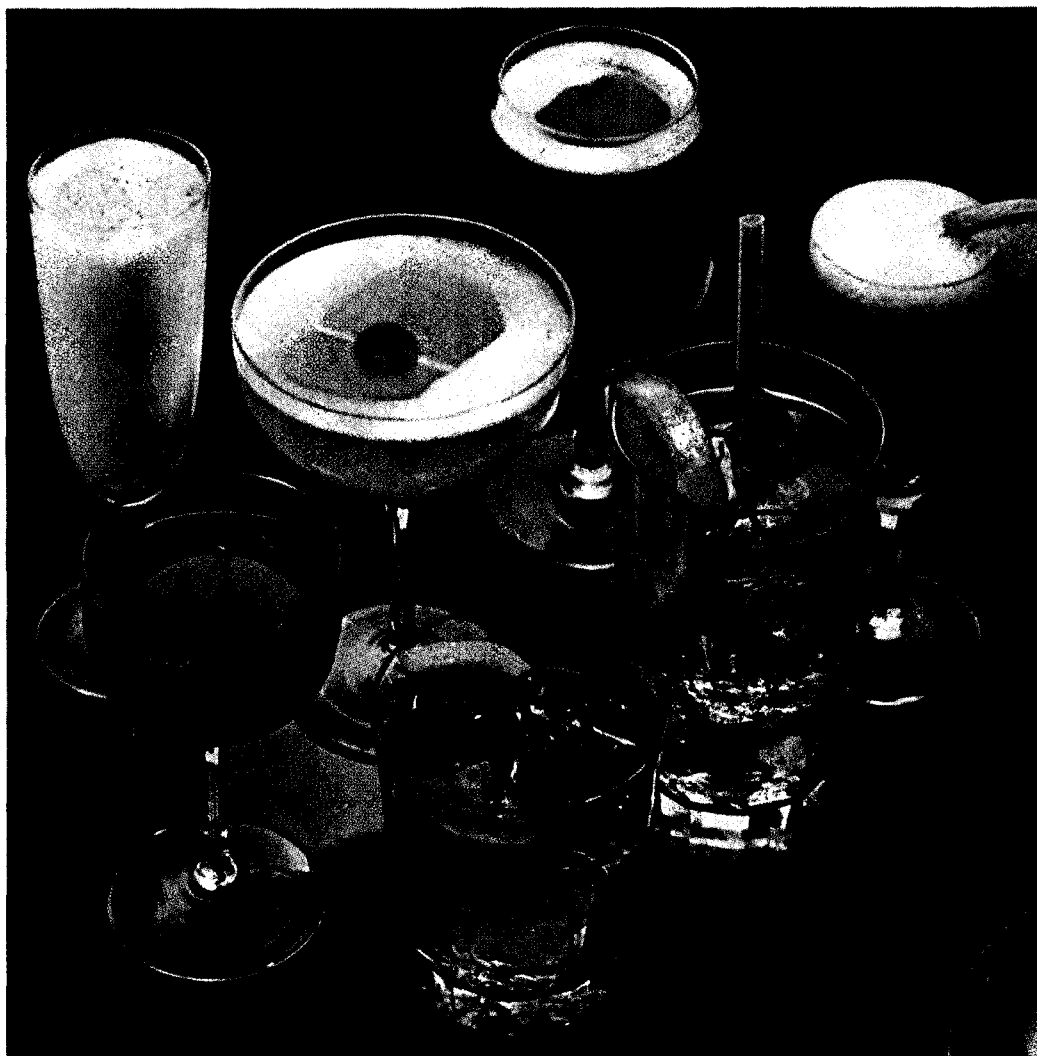


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Up 37%

1971
Phone Rates
Up 8%
(C.P.I.)

1961

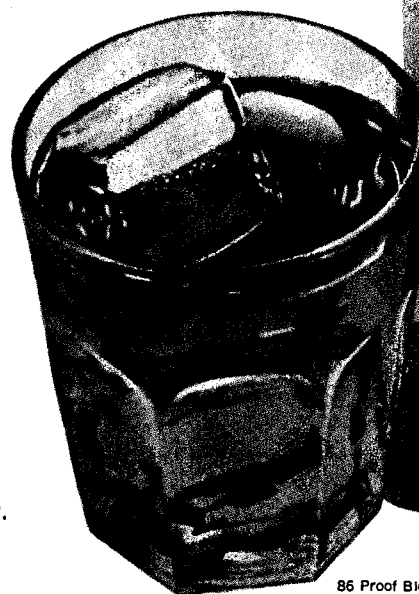




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it; one always does in the South. In the North, reporters ask about busing or the Panthers; in the South, they ask about "the situation." Landrieu is the mayor of a large Southern city nearly half black. "I'm not saying race is not an issue," he says. "I'm saying it's no longer the only issue."

But more than that, a good deal more. One combats two urges, one insisting that the race problem in America is intractable, the other that it will be settled in the South before it is settled in the North, and well solved at that. In New Orleans one can see and touch the past, the past a palpable thing in the look of the town and its people. This is a convention and tourist town, hard-drinking, whoring, easy-going, with none of the contemporary inelegance of Miami or Las Vegas. One's guess is that the blacks give the city its class and its atmosphere of endurance. The old men who played bass and trombone in Preservation Hall are perhaps the most self-possessed and dignified old men anywhere, the blues burned down so deep that a chorus of "Milenburg Joys" can break your heart.

A STREET CALLED TERPSICHORE.

In the North, the intellectual style now is despair and indifference, not without cause. Among politicians (probably a bad yardstick), only George McGovern evokes genuine admiration, and that is probably due to his prophecies. It can be plausibly argued that these are not enthusiastic times, that there's been too much enthusiasm in the last decade; an American could do worse than retreat to the safety of Muskie or Nixon. But the liberal North is distracted by the metaphors: Nixon, the war, the economy, the crisis of the spirit. It is a search for the source of the discontent. It is said that Southerners, intellectuals particularly, do not dwell on these matters. Deeply rooted to their own soil, and outside the direct influence of New York and Washington and the West Coast, of the press, the government, and the advance guard of academe, the South views the American crisis more calmly, and probably in greater perspective: hedgehog versus fox. It's a sticky argument, hard to bring off. The war: it is as if having had little to do with either starting the war or ending it, or feeling its effects in the manner of a Berkeley or a Columbia, the South is

partly freed from its psychological burdens. Always conscious of itself as a *place*, the South—particularly the intellectual and political communities—has gone on to more practical, constructive business. And it has wasted so much energy on race. Jim Chubbuck of the Institute of Politics at Loyola in New Orleans sees the ice breaking everywhere, and rejoices. He quotes a young Southern politician: "I can't cope. We're winning."

This is not to talk of utopias or promised lands, or of complete solutions or of the end of anxiety, but of a vision of the future. In the South the future seems clearer and more secure than elsewhere in the country. In North Carolina and Alabama, young attorneys general Robert Morgan and William Baxley are activists, "actually using their offices," as it was put, to effect social change. In Virginia, the Republican governor cheerfully sends his children on a bus each morning for a crosstown ride to a school predominantly black. Florida's able young Democratic governor, Reuben Askew, is a serious possibility for the vice presidential nomination. In Louisiana, the new governor, Edwin Edwards, the first Catholic governor of the state since the Civil War, put together a coalition of Cajuns, blacks, and liberal Democrats to defeat a liberal Republican; it was the first time that the black vote had proved decisive in Louisiana. In Plaquemines Parish, the two sons of Leander Perez carry on the old Bourbon traditions, up to a point—more or less as likable Louis XVIII tried to succeed Napoleon. The prospect is that for the first time since 1956, every Southern Democratic governor except George Wallace will actively support the Democratic nominee for President. Chubbuck says that in the South it is a middle-class revolution, engineered by men in their thirties and forties. Chubbuck's Institute of Politics was established not as a think tank for academics but as a trade school (or art institute) for present and future politicians.

The South, if Chubbuck and others are to be believed, is no longer hypnotized by the past, either from nostalgia or in pursuit of error. Oddly, it is the North which is fascinated by retrospection—how the country got from here to there, from the promise of 1960 to the performance of 1972. The nineteen fifties and early nine-

teen sixties in the South do not recall the serenity of Eisenhower or the elegance of Kennedy. They recall cattle prods and freedom rides, Montgomery and Jackson, Connor and King. Not much to be nostalgic about; so the region now tends to look ahead, not behind. The question is whether the South is ahead of the rest of the country, catching up, or an aberration. Or whether New Orleans is off the norm, one bizarre enclave. But it is an enormously encouraging atmosphere, paradoxical, contradictory, difficult to comprehend, and once comprehended, to believe. Forget the metaphors; it does a visitor no good at all to be told that the biggest problem in Louisiana is the *maa-fia*, "*maa-fia* all over the place."

Driving to lunch through the Garden District, one passes the streets named for Muses. Thalia. Clio. Melpomene. Euterpe. Polymnia. Terpsichore. Terpsi-core. And beyond it a street of graceful trees and wide porches, handsome grillwork, and a lady dressed in white walking a dachshund. The restaurant was once a mansion, and we were seated next to what must have been called the vestibule. We'd ordered drinks and were sitting quietly listening to the conversation at a neighboring table. These were local people, drinking Ramos gin fizz, talking calmly and quietly about a subject I hadn't heard discussed—in that way—in two years. They were talking about the war.

—WARD JUST

WASHINGTON

Even after all the fiddling with it that every Administration does in order to approve its appearance, the federal budget is still the best guide around to what the government is doing. It is also the most realistic document available. Opposition candidates can issue position papers and talk about what they might do, but the budget says how limited the options are. The budget may not be the greatest reading since *Gone With the Wind*, but it does tell us a good bit about what's going on. A look at what has happened to the allocation of federal expenditures in the past few years, and some attention to political realities behind the rhetoric, suggest just how hard it has been, and will be, to effect significant change.

WASHINGTON

A great deal of the federal government's money is committed automatically to such things as paying the interest on the national debt, social security, and welfare, Medicare, and Medicaid. And the costs of all of these keep rising. The expense of the medical programs are fairly out of sight compared with original expectations. The reason is instructive. Medicare, whatever the public may have thought when it was enacted in 1965, does not ensure medical treatment; it ensures the payment of medical bills. The real beneficiaries of this program—doctors, hospitals, and other medical facilities—are taking on the characteristics of those other private purveyors of federal responsibilities, the defense contractors. With the federal government obliged to pick up the tab, there is precious little incentive to hold down costs.

Another major portion of the budget goes for continuation of the mass of new domestic programs that were begun in the 1960s. Even those which the Democrats say are being starved cost money. With every new federal program there came a vociferous clientele: a federal bureaucracy and congressional subcommittees devoted to its perpetuation. And for all the outrage that has been vented against some subsidy programs, it is not realistic to expect the elimination of enough of them to amass any sizable savings. On balance, there is little on the domestic side of the budget ledger that could be changed.

Legerdemain

Four years ago, when the Vietnam War began to be wound down, the common expectation was that this would free money for domestic purposes. Charles Schultze, a Director of the Budget during the Johnson Administration, warned that there would be no "peace dividend" (August, 1968, *Atlantic*). He has turned out to be right. Schultze was saying not that this was the inevitable outcome but rather, given the realities of political pressures and behavior, the likely one. As Schultze predicted, the military has consumed most of the savings from Vietnam. The Nixon Administration refrains from giving out figures on the cost of the war, but ap-

proximate calculations can be obtained. In its peak year, the Vietnam War cost about \$23 billion. In the coming budget year, it will cost about \$4 to \$6 billion. Therefore, there has been a theoretical "saving" of at least some \$17 billion through winding down the war in Vietnam. But the Pentagon's request for next year is higher than it was at the height of the war.

Actually the amount of money that the Pentagon is requesting in the new budget—\$83.4 billion—is a good bit higher than the amount it is planning to spend (\$76.5 billion). The difference is due in part to some fiscal legerdemain: in order to hold down the election-year budget deficit, a total of about \$2 billion of this year's defense spending was pushed into last year's and next year's budgets. The difference between what the Pentagon is asking for and what it will actually spend is also attributable to the part the military budget will play in presidential politics.

The Nixon Administration has reduced Pentagon spending—when the effect of inflation is subtracted from its budget totals. But not by the theoretical \$17-billion "savings." For one thing, although the level of forces has been reduced, the cuts in what has been referred to as the "support structure"—bases, officers, supply staffs, and so on—have been not at all proportionate. For another, the costs of weapons keep rising, so much so that even the usually complaisant military committees in Congress are getting restive. Senate Armed Services Chairman John Stennis, Democrat of Mississippi, usually a trusty friend of the military in the tradition of the late Representative L. Mendel Rivers of South Carolina and Senator Richard Russell of Georgia, opposes an increase in defense spending and has raised his voice against "stratospheric price levels" of weapons systems and "rocketing" manpower costs.

Furthermore, as Schultze predicted, once spending for Vietnam decreased, the military services increased the pressure for new weapons which they had been denied during the war. The Administration's recent decision to have an American presence in the Indian Ocean—"from time to time," Defense Secretary Melvin Laird says—fulfills an old naval dream. It also undercuts the pressure to reduce the number of ex-

pensive (about \$1-billion) aircraft carriers the Navy maintains.

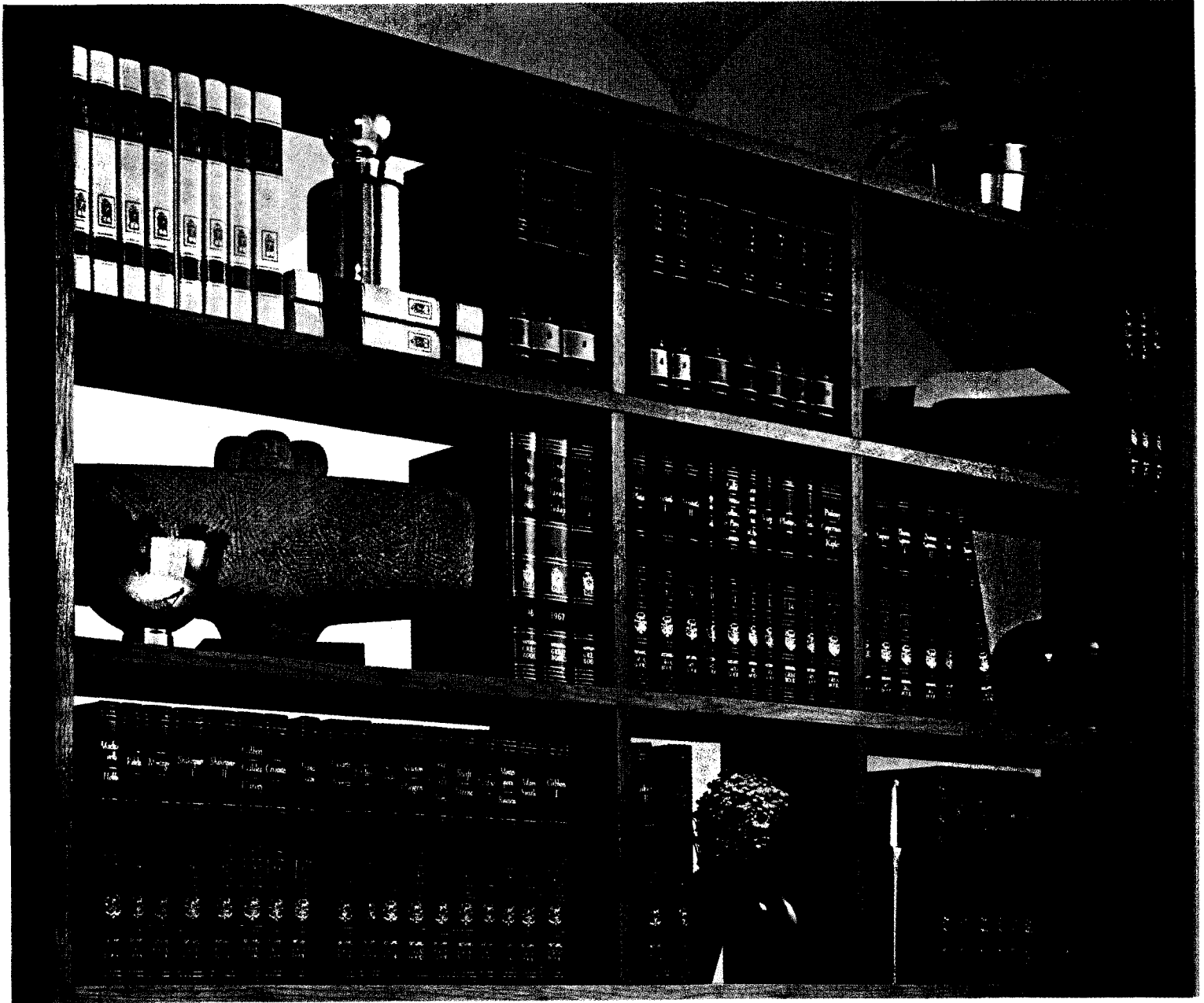
The Administration claims as an achievement that defense spending has declined as a percentage of the gross national product. That assumes that as the gross national product goes, so should defense spending, a connection that is not established. Also, it seems that the Administration wants to win points for its projected *increases* in defense spending.

The rise in defense spending that is to come is, so to speak, a two-edged political sword. On one side, it establishes that the Administration has not let the nation's defenses slip; on the other, it cuts unemployment. In arguing that it has kept the nation sufficiently prepared, the Administration will at once be on the defense against the right, and the offense against the left. The argument that there is a "defense gap," used by the Democrats against the Republican Administration in 1960, has now become the property of the Republican right. This Administration pays a good bit of attention to the right, pacifying it as best it can. On the other hand, the Pentagon is accustomed to citing the Soviet "threat" in order to justify its requests for funds. This has led to a somewhat schizoid rhetoric on the part of Defense officials. Two stories appeared in the *Washington Post* within a brief period, one with the headline: "U.S. Cites Russian Buildup; A-Force Push 'Tremendous,' Laird Warns"; the other headlined: "U.S. Military Second to None, Laird Aide Says." The projected jump in defense spending of \$6.3 billion is meant to muffle the right on the defense issue.

The Administration also has words for those on its left who have been arguing that defense spending should be cut. "A demagogue," says the President's budget message, naming no one in particular, "may find it easy enough to advocate that we simply allocate necessary defense dollars to social programs, but a responsible Congress and a responsible President cannot afford such easy answers."

This use of the defense budget as an offensive weapon is not, however, the result of any recently designed plan. As long ago as the summer of 1969, when Democratic senators, aided by some scientists and former defense officials, were mounting their noisiest assault on defense spending,

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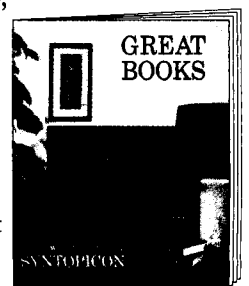
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WASHINGTON

one of the President's aides noted the controversy with some satisfaction. "The President," he said, "will be able to go to the people in 1972 and point out that while he was trying to negotiate with the Communists, the doves were beating their wings against him, trying to undermine his position and the country's strength." Current events show either that this man was very prescient or, more likely, that the White House has been maneuvering the Democrats into such a position all along, and the Democrats have obliged. At least one Democratic strategist here, a man as anxious to spend more for social purposes as the next fellow, is discomfited by the position his party is in on the defense issue, and wishes the whole matter would go away.

The increases in the defense budget are also designed to reduce unemployment—white-collar, technological unemployment—in such important electoral states as Texas, California, and Florida. In addition, the project to build a space shuttle, recently resuscitated by the Administration, will provide an estimated 50,000 jobs. The shuttle project, which is in the budget for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, was originally estimated by NASA to cost about \$6 billion, and is now estimated to cost anywhere from \$10 to \$14 billion—and it hasn't been begun. It bids fair to be the subject of a rather strong liberal attack this year, a symbol, like the SST last year, of the struggle over "priorities." Senator Walter Mondale, Democrat of Minnesota, a leader of the fight against the shuttle, realizes that in opposing it he is in the position of being against jobs. To underline the point, Vice President Agnew recently gave a speech (not by coincidence) in Florida calling those who attacked the space shuttle "career leftists." "We heard the old familiar refrain," the Vice President said, "about not attending to the need to reorder our national priorities."

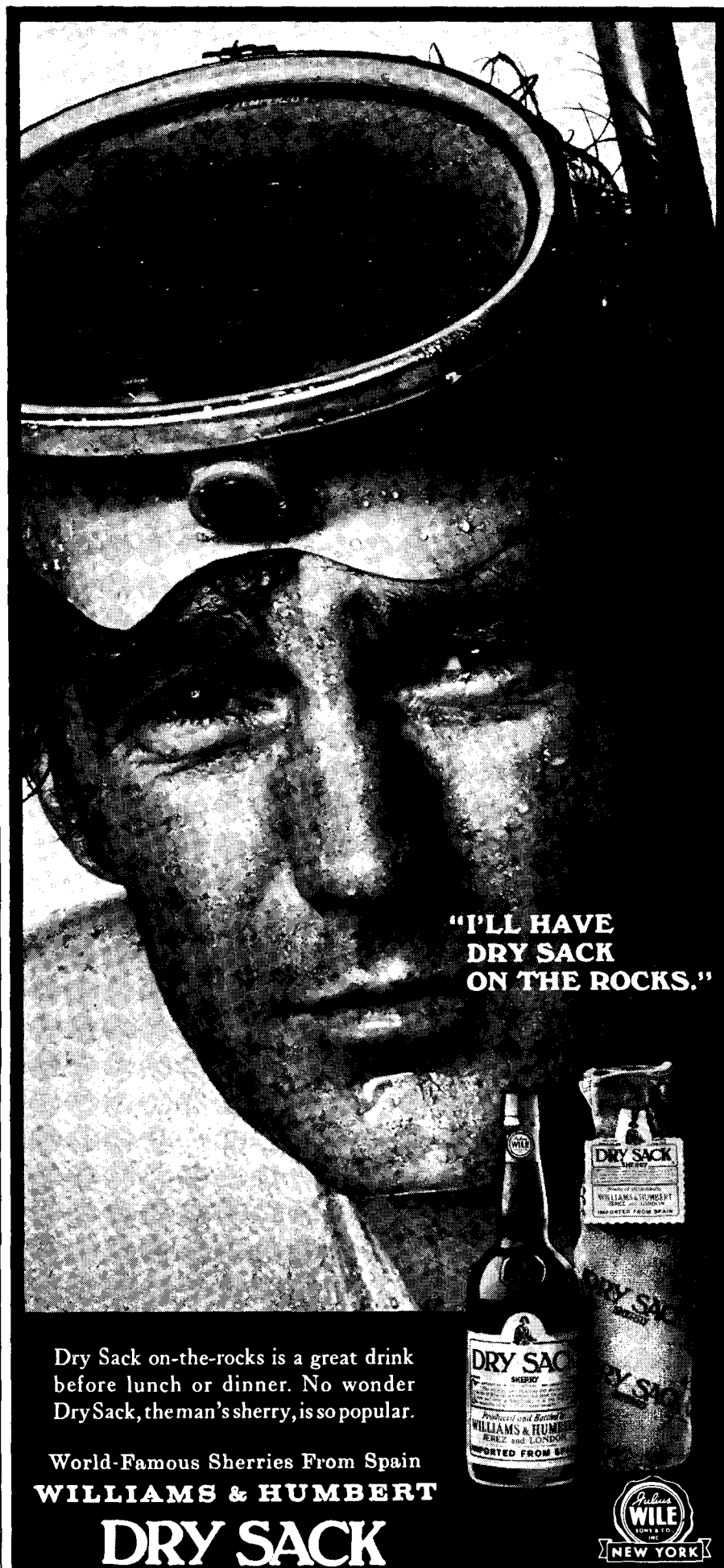
The Democrats and outside groups have put forward a number of alternative defense budgets, with cuts ranging from \$10 billion to about \$30 billion. (The latter figure is George McGovern's). But there is a good deal of difference between what *could* have been cut and what *would* have

been cut. Candid tacticians of the Democrats' assaults on the Nixon defense budgets now say that if the Democrats had been in charge, facing their own political and military exigencies, the defense budget might be no more than about \$5 billion lower than President Nixon's thus far. The new defense budget, however, makes substantial commitments for future spending; if these increases are approved by the Congress, there will be still less prospect for spending for other things.

Aside from the demands of ongoing domestic programs, and the failure to make more substantial reductions in military spending, there is a third factor that has led to the current bind: the tax cuts of the past few years. For these, too, the credit, or the blame, can be handed around on a bipartisan basis. Taxes were cut in 1964 and 1965 in order to stimulate the economy. It was argued then by some, in vain, that the revenues should be given over to social purposes instead of to the private sector, and that this too would have a stimulative effect. In 1968, a surcharge was finally enacted to help pay for the war. But the surcharge was lifted in 1969, before—long before—the war was over. The 1969 legislation began as tax reform, but by the time the Congress finished with it, it also included a substantial amount of tax relief, a turn of events which the Administration did not resist until it was too late. Democracy has its good points, to be sure, but history shows that the Congress cannot be left to its own devices on the subject of taxes. The temptation to cut them is simply too overpowering, a seduction congressmen cannot resist. It is estimated that the tax cuts of 1969 and 1971 will amount to a permanent loss of \$15 billion in revenues.

Giving it away

When Schultze predicted four years ago that the end of the war in Vietnam would not be accompanied by the release of funds for other purposes because of military spending, tax cuts, and the increasing costs of government programs, he argued that the country would reach a point where it would have to decide whether it wanted to tax itself to meet domestic needs. That is where we are now. And we are there not so much



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because of what has happened to the military as because of what has happened to civilian spending. The fix we are in now is something new in American history. Until now, spending for the civilian sector—a phenomenon of far more recent vintage than is usually realized—was not of sufficient proportions to make any substantial claims on the economy. There was virtually no spending for domestic purposes until the 1930s, and even then there was not much. Only in the last decade did domestic spending make heavy claims on the budget.

The problem until recently, if anyone can still believe it, was usually how to get rid of the federal revenues that kept rolling in. Taxes were raised only during wars; after the wars, taxes were reduced. After the Mexican War, there was so much excess money in the Treasury that there was a sort of revenue-sharing program which gave the money to the states to spend as they chose. After three installments were handed out, the 1837 depression took place, and the program was canceled. The Director of the Budget in 1927 was in the enviable position of complaining that “despite persistent efforts” to cut revenues, “we seem helpless in the face of the country’s continuing prosperity.” The economists came along later with their terminology kits and called this phenomenon the “fiscal dividend” which accrues through the natural growth in the economy. They said that the problem was to spend this money to avoid “fiscal drag,” and that gave rise to the Heller-Pechman plan of the early sixties, which became the revenue-sharing plan. Revenue sharing, in other words, began as a way of shoveling out surplus moneys in the Treasury. The idea of revenue sharing is still with us, but the surplus money is not. If revenue sharing is enacted by the Congress, it will largely supplant other spending. There is still an annual growth in government revenues of over \$20 billion, but most of that is now absorbed by financing existing programs.

The simple fact is that no one—not Richard Nixon or the Democrat who might replace him—will be able to do very much to meet domestic needs unless taxes are raised. The subject is in the air now. Even President Nixon

talks about it, on the last page of his budget message—perhaps on the fairly safe assumption that not very many people read budget messages. After bowing to the “desire for less pervasive government,” and the “private enterprise system with its competitive spirit and its work ethic,” he slips in a reference to his “hope that the *inevitable* need for new taxes could be delayed as long as possible.” (Italics added.) “I am not averse to a day of reckoning,” he said, “but when it comes, I want it to be said that this administration foresaw the danger . . .” (Earlier in the budget message, the President takes credit for the tax cuts that have taken place since he took office, and calls this “the return of power to the people.” “In 1973,” he points out, “individuals will pay \$22 billion less in Federal income taxes than they would if the tax rates and structure were the same as those in existence when I took office.”)

Beyond fine print

It is a pretty good bet that in the early 1970s, “reordering priorities” will go the way of “reciprocal trade” and the “war on poverty,” and that the next great issue on the agenda will be taxes. Not just taxes but *whose* taxes, which is first cousin to the issue of “redistribution of wealth.” The tax system may seem arcane, and the tax lawyers have done their expensive best to make it so, but it is at the heart of the matter of who pays for what in this country. While most citizens may be unclear as to what the fine print in the tax laws and the budget say, the ever increasing number of lawyers here, and representatives of groups with a line to the federal till, are not. And there is little point in talking about what ought to be done to deal with national problems without taking into account how hard, under current circumstances, it might be to do it. Any politician promising the moon, to use a perhaps outmoded metaphor, might well be asked with what he plans to pay for it. If he says he would “reorder priorities,” he should be pressed for details.

There are a number of routes for raising revenues. The value-added tax, or national sales tax, which the Administration is talking about would not raise funds, for its stated purpose is to supplant property taxes. A second approach is to reform the

tax system. It is now beginning to be better understood just how far we have moved from a progressive income tax and what sort of politics of class has been played.

While taxes have been cut, there has been a significant shift in the distribution of the tax burden. The social security payroll tax has provided a steadily larger percentage of tax revenues, and it is regressive: it takes no account of total income; it contains no exemptions or deductions for size of family, size of medical bills, or what have you. The extent to which the payroll tax is regressive is partly masked by the mythology that social security is a sort of insurance system instead of what it is—a tax on those who work now, to support retired people now.

Joseph Pechman of the Brookings Institution has done a study of the tax system that is getting a lot of attention here, for it provides the kind of information that helps raise public consciousness about an issue. He found that although the progressive income tax is supposed to tax incomes at rates ranging from 14 percent to 70 percent, on the average, people pay at far lower rates. He found, for example, that those with incomes of \$50,000 to \$100,000 pay slightly less than 25 percent, and those with annual incomes of \$1 million or more pay only about 32 percent. The tax system, in other words, is the prime procedure for redistributing income—in either direction. The more progressive it is, the more it redistributes from the wealthy to the poor; the more regressive, the more it helps the rich.

There is also the standard shopping list for reforming the tax system through closing “loopholes,” taxing stock options and capital gains at regular rates, raising inheritance taxes, and so on. But several veterans of tax-reform battles here say that even with a great deal of effort, only about \$5 to \$6 billion in new revenue could be gained through tax reform. That leaves a general tax increase as the one source of revenues sufficient to change significantly the way in which the federal government spends its money. The question remains whether, even if more money is raised, there has been fresh thinking about ways to spend it well. But that is another subject.

—ELIZABETH DREW

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Innocent Bystander

What I Gave at the Office

by L. E. Sissman

Cleaning out my desk recently before leaving my old job, after nearly sixteen years, for a new one, I was surprised to feel a bit of a twinge, if not a pang, at the change. When I stopped to start to think about it, hefting my shopping bags full of letters, verse worksheets, and old advertising awards down the elevator, I realized that the old job still had some claim on me, if for no other reason than the fact that I still had some claim on it, having given it, on the average, some fifty-five hours a week of working, worrying, and commuting, or about five solid years of my life. While I felt neither outrage nor regret at this state of affairs, it got me to thinking about the nature of life at the office and its inevitable effect on the rest of our lives.

At worst, the office is a place you go to to earn enough to provide the necessities for your family; the necessity for work itself may be loathsome, but it is unquestioned. At best, the office is a place where your training and your ego get at least an intermittent chance to shine; where you work with others who, with luck, may include you in a team of motivated, purposeful people combining forces to achieve a goal; where you work for something more than survival alone. In that kind of office, your time is not wasted, your life is not frittered away in eight-hour segments; however trivial the product may be, you are actively furthering your life while earning a living.

The office is, to begin with, a little, closed, and often inalterable diagram of our society. This microcosm may take two forms: first, what Douglas McGregor (and later Robert Towns-

end) have called the Theory X organization, run largely on the principle that people are fundamentally lazy and must be coerced, by discipline and punishment, to work; second, the Theory Y company, founded on the idea that work is a natural and normal component of human life, and that most people will work best when provided with rewards, incentives, and esprit de corps. There is a third form, which I'll take the liberty of dubbing Theory Z: a Theory Y enclave within a much larger Theory X organism. This is the kind of firm I worked for, and apart from occasional run-ins with Top Management (fortunately based in another city several hundred miles away), our little local operation rocked along quite satisfactorily on its own initiative, though probably not as successfully as if it had been an autonomous local Theory Y.

Within the little social paradigm of a given office, regardless of the theory its managers subscribe to, there is an almost tribal organization which requires each member to behave according to certain tacitly sanctioned standards, or unwritten laws (the British writer Antony Jay is good on this point in his recent book, *Corporation Man*, though he leans a bit too heavily on a literal analogy with the tribal ten-man group). What makes the result fascinating, and an education in psychology and life for anybody in a company who will unstop his eyes and ears, is the tension between the corporate good and the individual good, particularly in firms which are run by paternalistic tyrants. Here, the employee is brainwashed into believing that what is best for the company will therefore be best for him; if his job-security quotient is high enough or his hostages to fortune numerous enough, he will unfortunately believe it, and believe it the more as he climbs higher in the hierarchy. At its worst, in fact, this kind of company reaches out into the personal lives of its people, vetting their wives (and sometimes husbands) before hiring them, dictating what suburbs men on a certain level shall live in, dictating, too, which employees they may socialize with outside office hours. (For an instant Kafkaesque vision of hell, consider the position of the first black executive in a company like this.) This kind of firm, which very closely resembles the present So-

viet government, is really far more concerned with preserving its structure than with changing to meet the times. The hierarchy is all. Though there is some revolutionary sentiment among the lower orders, they must check it at the door to their first junior-executive office if they are to prosper with, and profit from, the company.

The Theory Y outfit, while much more open to change and mutation precisely because it has no vested interest in a hierarchy, still has some immutable laws of its own; again, there is a highly educative conflict between individual and corporate good. The problem is this: if you are Y enough to go out and hire Young Turks and revolutionaries to help you run your business, how can you turn them from lone wolves, out only for themselves, into team players? The answer is, you can't, entirely. A certain percentage of brilliant loners can never reconcile themselves to sharing credit, to throwing in their lot with a group of peers; in their own minds, they *have* no peers. These men and women can't last long, even in an exceedingly permissive firm. If nothing else, they will cross, anger, and neutralize the team workers. Fortunately, though, there are a lot of equally brilliant people who need others enough, perhaps because they feel consciously insecure enough, to play on a team and share the credit for the work.

Out of this symbiosis can develop something most exciting, even if the actual work or its result is, as I've suggested, relatively trivial. What seems to happen is that the pooled egos of the team members create something greater than the sum of its parts—a detailed, foolproof solution to a problem, say, that no one member could think through for himself. A creative problem-solving team on the verge of an answer is a stimulating thing to behold and be part of. Each member subjectively makes a contribution. Every other member instantly reacts to this suggestion, but if the group's working right, not in a selfish or ego-centric way. Every other member, in short, adds either his objectivity to an evaluation of the suggestion or his creative subjectivity to an improvement on it. Like ants or a bucket brigade or, at the highest level, an ensemble of actors, the group bands together to find the one most logi-

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BYSTANDER

cal and productive answer. At moments like this—moments of breakthrough—every member of the group feels a pride in the emerging solution and an exhilaration that can be described only as being off the ground. The group, severally and together, has stood on a frontier, however modest, of human skill or execution, and has raised, so to speak, the flag at Iwo Jima. It is the flag of the human spirit that is raised, though; there is something ennobling about such at least momentarily selfless teamwork. There's a kind of current of love among the members, too: each takes pride in the other's contribution and loves him better for it.

At this point, even in the dreariest of offices, the members of the group also feel another emotion: the emotion a student of the drama feels at a superb theatrical performance, the emotion the painter or writer, alone in his studio, feels when he has suddenly turned the corner and mastered the problem of the work before him. This emotion is signaled by a sort of prickling behind the eyes, by a chill down the spine (or actual gooseflesh), by the desire to weep, not for sorrow but in exultation at what men can be.

So leaving an office where you have often experienced this emotion, have worked harmoniously (at least at times) with others, have thereby learned to love and value them, can be a bit more of a wrench than I would have suspected. There are other things as well about an office where you spend a large proportion of your waking life: the hold it takes on you as an important part of your known world (early in the morning, before the hall lights are on, you can step off the elevator and find the light switch in total darkness without groping); the sense of proprietorship you feel, even if you're the most junior clerk, when you arrive before anyone else and prowl the empty corridors and typing pools at the start of a new day; the sense of purposeful action, of ongoing enterprise, of the life-force itself that you feel when you look out over a roomful of busy people at the height of a workday; the sense of dedication and discipline and worthiness you feel when it's dark outside, the lights are on, and you're working late alone.

All this is satisfying and fulfilling; even if you live for your family, for an avocation, or for some other goal, a sense of belonging at—and to—the office helps to round and validate your life. But it seems especially important and rewarding if, like me, you also practice a personal art or craft outside office hours. For the last twenty years in business, I have attended a sort of graduate school in human behavior—my own no less than other people's—and have, I think, learned a great deal no amount of reading or study or meditating in the privacy of my workroom could conceivably have taught me. What's more, I earned while I learned: my advanced training in being human was wholly subsidized by a kind management. Whatever I gave at the office, I took far more away.

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Yoichi Okamoto

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63, 65, 67,—Lee Balterman
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THE MAIL

ALSOP'S NIXON

SIR: Re Stewart Alsop's "Nixon and the Square Majority" (February *Atlantic*): I am a conservative rather relishing the slight calm Nixon has been able to arrange, even enjoying the frustration of those who seem to fear he might prove them wrong. I really don't know how much of the chaos and confusion of the last decade was avoidable; I have no idea whether a semblance of serenity can be achieved in this present day; but I would rather take my chance with Nixon than with any of the Democrats.

May I append this bit of Squaresville?

The Democrats march in array,
Their banners are tattered and gray,
They shout all the time,
Which is surely a sign,
They haven't a damn thing to say.

GEORGE B. BARNES
Detroit, Mich.

SIR: Apparently Stewart Alsop believes that real class consists of (1) turning away from a fight or challenge; (2) slopping up one's furnishings; (3) spurning athletics; (4) being glib while maintaining a rigid ideology.

That's class all right. I'd say it's hippie class.

MRS. C. CAREY
Milwaukee, Wis.

SIR: I don't share Stewart Alsop's favorable appraisal of Dick Nixon's ability as a statesman. It would be interesting, in fact, to know if it was generated by the National Republican Committee.

THEODORE WILSON
Clinton, Minn.

SIR: In your February issue I find

this: "Nixon belongs to the minority strain of the *genus politicus Americanus*." Here is a little comment on someone's Latinity:

Le mot *genus*,
Chez les Romains,
N'a jamais été
Masculin.
Il me fait peur,
Cher Rédacteur,
Qu'un tel chez vous
Ne soit au bout
De son latin.

GEOFFREY B. RIDDEHOUGH
Department of Classics
University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

SIR: Shouldn't Stewart Alsop's phrase read, "*genus politicum Americanum*," not "*genus politicus Americanus*"?

REV. JOHN WHELLY C.S.C.
Saint Joseph College of Florida
Jensen Beach, Fla.

NASSER AND ISRAEL

SIR: The Khartoum conference of the Arab States, headed by the late President Nasser, adopted a policy of the three negatives: no peace with, no recognition of, no negotiation with Israel. Yet Georgiana G. Stevens ("Report on Egypt," January *Atlantic*) writes:

Above all, Egypt holds to the agreement which the late President Nasser bequeathed his heirs: to recognize Israel as a Middle East state.

The publication of this kind of false information makes one wonder whether reading newsmagazines is worth the time and effort.

HARVEY B. SCHECHTER
Sherman Oaks, Calif.

Georgiana Stevens replies:

In June of 1970, Secretary of State Rogers put forward the so-called Rogers Plan to end the impasse be-

tween Israel and the Arab states. The plan included the following points:

1. A representative of each state to be appointed to negotiate under Ambassador Jarring's supervision to implement the terms of the UN Security Council Resolution of November 22, 1967, regarding Middle East peace.

2. Recognition of Israel as a Middle East state.

3. Israeli withdrawal from areas occupied since June, 1967.

4. Restoration of a cease-fire for at least ninety days.

On July 23, 1970, Gamal Abdel Nasser announced to the Arab Socialist Union Congress:

The Egyptian Foreign Minister has informed the U.S. Secretary of State that we agree to the U.S. proposals This is now an opportunity.

In the same speech, explaining his announcement, Nasser said:

We do not seek war for the sake of war, but we want to liberate the occupied territories. When we embark on political action we expect it to succeed. But when political action is exposed to failure, we will have only military action before us.

Following this move the then Minister of National Guidance, Muhammad Hasanyn Heikal, said at a press conference on August 12, 1970:

We will not fight for the sake of war itself It is clear that we expected certain people to be unhappy with this, but I am confident there are many who have been really happy about it. I specifically mean the Palestinian people. . . . All the reports and messages we receive from the occupied territories, from Gaza, from the West Bank . . . support Egypt's stand.

This statement was in reply to many questions about Nasser's new

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- ☐ South Pacific ☐ Orient ☐ Africa ☐ Middle East



position and soon after the government had suspended the use of its broadcast services by the fedayeen, immediately following Nasser's announcement.

A year later, on July 23, 1971, President Sadat, addressing the ASU Congress, said:

If Americans want to talk to me, then they are welcome. I will talk because I will never stop looking for any road leading to peace if there is a chance for peace. If there is no chance for peace, then there is no alternative but the battle.

Under President Sadat the ceasefire has continued for eighteen months. An interim plan for reopening the Suez Canal, first suggested by General Moshe Dayan, and later offered by Sadat, is under discussion; and Dr. Jarring is again active. This would seem to confirm the willingness of both sides to talk rather than to fight.

ADVICE AND CONSENT

SIR: Philatelists are likely to question the statement of National Gallery of Art Director John Walker in his "Secrets of a Museum Director" (February *Atlantic*) that the 210 square inches of painted wood on which appears Leonardo da Vinci's beautiful and valuable picture *Ginevra de' Benci* are "the most expensive square inches in existence."

"By agreement," the price paid the Prince of Liechtenstein by the National Gallery of Art for the painting in 1966 has never been revealed by either buyer or seller, but from the account of the presale negotiations in the article, it must have been less than \$10 million. The square-inch price, therefore, was probably not more than \$47,000.

A few years ago, according to press accounts, \$300,000 was paid for the rarest and most valuable postage stamp known to be in existence (a single copy), the one-cent denomination issued by British Guiana in 1856.

The British Guiana stamp is approximately one square inch in size and is at least six times as valuable as the Da Vinci painting.

ROGER C. HACKETT
Raleigh, N.C.

SIR: In his piece on last fall's Playboy Convocation ("Gathering at Bunnymede," January *Atlantic*), Richard

Todd mentions in his list of those attending that "the Gay Taleses and the Calvin Trillins were there." I am sure that this was an oversight. There are not *two* Gay Taleses. There is a Nan Talese and a Gay Talese. I don't know about Calvin Trillin, but I suspect that there are not two Calvin Trillins. These matters are important to consider in this day and age.

JEAN CURTIS
Watertown, Mass.

SIR: Mark Schorer was the right critic to review Conrad Aiken's *Ushant* (February *Atlantic*) but erred in saying that Aiken lived in Rye, New York. Off and on during the twenties and thirties, Aiken lived in England. His house at Rye, Sussex, was near that of the Old Master (Henry James) and was christened "Jeake's House," for at that time Aiken was writing the "London Letters to *The New Yorker*" under the pseudonym of Samuel Jeakes, Jr. Rye (called Saltinge in *Ushant*) is described with great affection, and because its owner found it "as compelling for him as ever the fabled gold and spices to the voyagers of the past," I thought this error should be corrected.

MAUREEN CONNELLY
Assistant Professor of English
Boston State College
Boston, Mass.

The Atlantic, not Mr. Schorer, was in error.
—THE EDITOR

SIR: I've never read a better football story than Larry King's "The Beasts of Baltimore" (January *Atlantic*). It was witty and made me laugh, but I could really feel the pain too. I love the Colts and I loved the article.

MARGARET M. MANN
Austin, Tex.

SIR: Alfred Adler's article "Science and Evil" in the February *Atlantic* deserves the highest praise.

I agree, in a sense, that "science is the best defense we have against ethical disintegration." But is this not just another way of saying that God is the best defense we have against the chaos and terror of the world?

As the late Harry Emerson Fosdick once pointed out, "Those who go against Science go against God," for Science is Truth, and Truth is just another name for God!

PALMER VAN GUNDY
Los Angeles, Calif.

Contributors

WARD JUST's "Soldiers" (*The Atlantic*, October, November, 1970) was later published in book form as *Military Men*. He is now at work on a novel.

ELIZABETH DREW is *The Atlantic's* Washington editor.

HARRY MCPHERSON, discussed on page 4, was counsel to President Johnson.

PABLO NERUDA, 1971 Nobel Prize winner for poetry, is Chile's Ambassador to France. Translator ANDREW GLAZE is the author of a book of poems, *Damned Ugly Children*.

H. L. MOUNTZOURES is the author of a forthcoming novel, *The Bridge*.

JAMES ALAN MCPHERSON, also discussed on page 4, interviewed Ralph Ellison in the December, 1970, *Atlantic*.

CHARLES THOMAS SAMUELS' books include *Casebook on Film*; he is at work on a new one called *Encountering Directors*.

TODD HUNT teaches journalism at Rutgers, and is author of a forthcoming book, *Reviewing for the Mass Media*.

DENIS JOHNSON, a 1971 graduate of the University of Iowa, is at work on a novel.

TU FU (713-770 A.D.) has been translated by Mark Perlberg, a Chicago poet, and Lee Feigon, a Chinese language scholar.

JAROLD RAMSEY teaches English at the University of Rochester.

JOSIAH BUNTING III, a U.S. Army officer who teaches English at West Point, is the author of a novel just published, *The Lionheads*.

DARRALL BERIRO is an American who traveled with her husband 10,000 miles across Russia and recently deep into the Amazonian jungle.

L. E. SISSMAN, DAVID DENBY, EDWARD WEEKS, and PHOEBE ADAMS appear regularly in these pages.

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BEYOND WORDS

Writing for the President

by Harry McPherson

—but what is heroic death compared to eternal
watching
with a cold apple in one's hand on a narrow chair
with a view of the ant-hill and the clock's dial

Adieu prince I have tasks a sewer project
and a decree on prostitutes and beggars
I must also elaborate a better system of prisons
since as you justly said Denmark is a prison
I go to my affairs
—Zbigniew Herbert, "Elegy of Fortinbras"

In 1965 one could still feel John Kennedy's presence in the White House. I walked out of the mansion one cold, starry night, headed for my office in the West Wing, and imagined I saw that lithe figure standing in the Oval Office, his back to the window; but it was only an aide.

I missed his wry humor, his detachment about himself, his rejection of all that was mawkish and banal in politics. If he had not generated widespread public sentiment for social change, he had helped the nation to gain a perspective on its problems in which reason played a greater part than passion. One of the many terrible ironies of the sixties was that the shock of Kennedy's death was a more powerful stimulus to congressional action than was his presidency.

Another irony lay in the response many of his partisans made to Lyndon Johnson. To the most passionate of these, Johnson was simply a usurper. The presidency had passed from Hyperion to a satyr. To others Johnson was a parvenu, and always would be. His accent was the occasion for scorn among people

who had regarded Kennedy's way of saying "Cuber" as picturesque.

A distinguished reporter told me, "I don't hate Johnson. I just hate the fact that all the grace and wit has gone from what the American President says." I said that I found it difficult, reading his commentary, to make the distinction. I did not say that I could understand how reporters might have enjoyed Kennedy's deft banter more than three hours of self-justifying stream of consciousness by Johnson. It was hard to be fair in a climate spoiled by hurt feelings.

* * *

"If we stand passively by, while the center of each city becomes a hive of deprivation, crime and hopelessness . . . if we become two people, the suburban affluent and the urban poor, each filled with mistrust and fear for the other . . . if this is our desire and policy as a people, then we shall effectively cripple each generation to come."

Thus began the first presidential message on which I worked. What followed were the nuts and bolts: "special grants amounting to 80% of the non-Federal cost of our grant-in-aid programs," "planning funds for the coordinated treatment of the regional transportation network," and so on. They were the substance of the program. The rhetoric would last only a day or two; whether the cities would be helped depended on how well the "Urban Problems Task Force" had foreseen real-life problems and designed a practical structure to meet them which the President could persuade Congress to adopt.

Since Kennedy had promised to get us moving

again, Democratic speech-writers had forced the pace of everything the President for whom they worked said. Nothing was too small to be termed "urgent." The consequences of inaction were never less than drastic; action would always bring redemption, prosperity, or civil peace. Sometimes the problem was described so severely that the program seemed feeble by comparison.

I speculated that writers for conservative Presidents did not have such problems. Their guiding principle was good management, where ours was social change. Good management was an end in itself. Social change, on the other hand, was a process—involving the recognition of legitimate needs, the arousal of expectations that they should and could be met, the creation of laws and bureaucracies, and a payoff—money, health care, the right to vote and get a job, better schools. The process could fail at any point—most often at the payoff. It could not even be started unless the needs were recognized and the expectations aroused. To do that, a leader had to raise his voice. He could not engage in an academic debate; he could not take a long view of history, in which crowded cities and poverty seemed in retrospect the benevolent engines of progress; he could not say, "Perhaps it would be wise"; he had to say, "We must."

In pressing hard for change Johnson took great risks, both for himself and for the country. He had to convey not only a poignant sense of the misery to be relieved but also confidence that money and organization and skill could relieve it. Otherwise men would do nothing.

If he proposed a law prohibiting certain malign practices—such as excluding blacks from restaurants and voting booths—he was relatively sure that he could effect the change he sought if the law was passed. If his goal was to provide medical care for the aged and needy, or a college education for poor youth, that required considerably more administration—the resolution of disputes with hospitals, universities, and so forth. Still, as checks could be delivered, so could doctors and teachers. But if he proposed to "rebuild the core of our cities," "give men new skills, and thus new hope," or "give the poor control over their own lives," that was another matter. A labyrinth of bureaucratic controls, social workers, planners, deputy assistants, consultants, and acronyms came into being; governors and mayors became at once acquisitive and suspicious; groups of militants, each with a voluble spokesman, formed overnight; Congress, which might have been sympathetic enough to pass the enabling bill, became tightfisted when it was asked to appropriate money for it; war and other demands elbowed for priority attention; and soon the newspapers, which had faulted the President for "insufficient vision" the last time around, began to ask whether he had promised more than he could produce. The beneficiaries of the programs grew restive, and then angry, when the gap between goals and reality remained as wide as ever. In

an age that exalted instant gratification, in a country that gloried in its standing as "the richest, the most powerful in the world," there could be no excuse for failure to deliver swift social change, not when the President had called for it and the Congress had apparently agreed to it.

The Johnson Administration could have used more restraint. It could have aimed only at those social and economic injustices which would yield to the ready application of public resources. Instead of training, advising, and seeking to engage the poor, it could have written a monthly check and said it's up to them.

But a new philosophy of government had emerged since New Deal days. In essence it held that our problems were more of the spirit than of the flesh. People were suffering from a sense of alienation from one another, of anomie, of powerlessness. This affected the well-to-do as much as it did the poor. Middle-class women, bored and friendless in the suburban afternoons; fathers, working at "meaningless" jobs, or slumped before the television set; sons and daughters desperate for "relevance"—all were in need of community, beauty, and purpose, all were guilty because so many others were deprived while they, rich beyond their ancestors' dreams, were depressed. What would change all this was a creative public effort: for the middle class, new parks, conservation, the removal of billboards and junk, adult education, consumer protection, better television, aid to the arts; for the poor, jobs, training, Head Start, decent housing, medical care, civil rights; for both, and for bridging the gap between them, VISTA, the Teacher Corps, the community action agencies, mass transportation, Model Cities.

It was a magnificent design. It would make America the Great Society, where, in the President's words, "the meaning of our lives matches the marvelous products of our labor." It would make, of Kafka's despairing "K," Whitman's robust "I." It would satisfy the philosophers and social scientists, the political bosses and the independents, the moderate Republicans and union Democrats, two thirds of the voters, and nearly all the papers.

If it could be done. If government programs could overcome their own inertia, and the limitations of those who ran them.

In 1969, at the end of our time in the White House, I winced at the striving rhetoric I had written at the beginning. By then Richard Nixon and Pat Moynihan and others had all decried the dangers of raising more hopes than one could satisfy. Because the Johnson Administration had done so, they said, it had contributed to violence and disrespect for authority. The implication was that it was better to let sleeping dogs lie unless one had something to feed them.

I thought we might have been more cautious in claiming what we did for our programs. But that we should not have tried to awaken the country to its needs and dangers, and to suggest the means of re-

sponding to them, seemed a cold judgment. I would have removed many dramatic phrases from those early messages; I would have warned that whatever we attempted might fail, or take many years to succeed; I would have wished to concentrate on more conventional goals, and to have avoided such concepts as "community" and "meaning." I might have written as urgently of the need to restrain the worst in man as of the need to help him become "the best that is within him to become." But I would not have traded Johnson's vast hopes and intentions for another man's bookkeeping prudence.

With the possible exception of King Ibn Saud, no other national leader traveled abroad with such a retinue as the American President. Baggage-handlers, communications experts, Secret Service agents, secretaries, reporters, press officers, foreign policy specialists, military aides, a protocol chief, pilots and stewards, valets, advance men, and speech-writers—all crowded into *Air Force One* or the "backup" planes and took off for the world, ready for anything.

In the early fall of 1966, presidential aides Bill Moyers, John Roche, Jim Symington—the Chief of Protocol—and I led a party around the rim of the Western Pacific, preparing the way for Johnson. We flew to Samoa, Wellington, Canberra, Manila, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Seoul, and back to Washington in eight days. Moyers arranged facilities for the press at each stop, Symington got the dignitaries straight and found quarters for the President, Roche and I talked politics with local scholars and journalists, and a remarkable man named Marty Underwood made sure there would be enthusiastic crowds along the route. Underwood was a broad-faced, genial politician who remembered everything, and got his way—rather, the President's way—more often by ingenuity than by threat. (Once in Mexico City, desperate to produce a great reception for Johnson on two days' notice, he persuaded an official to snarl the transportation system at the rush hour shortly before Johnson arrived, and so created a massive captive audience in the center of the city.) In much of Asia, his talents were unnecessary to produce a crowd; the Asians saw to that. His job was to get Johnson through the waving multitudes in time to meet a king or a president.

Thirty-six hours after we returned home, we left again with Johnson. From notes along the way:

SAMOA: Hot. Reception line of a hundred local leaders and their wives. Average weight two hundred fifty pounds. Each couple places leis of flowers and shells around the Johnsons' necks, which midway through line begin to sag. Our advance man (whom Moyers' plane had dropped off on previous trip), perspiring happily, says Samoan mothers teach their daughters one hundred positions for making love, called *ami-ami*. Men do not need to move unless they feel like it.

Johnson makes a speech, written on the plane. Follows classic pattern: You have reduced (measles, illiteracy, dependence on us), you are doubling (GNP, use of fertilizer, dependence on us), you have built (factories, classrooms, new society), you have stood fast against (Communism, tides of despair, voices that say). Eyes of the world are upon you. Samoans listen respectfully, thinking about that. Johnsons go off to see educational television experiment. I stay to watch native dances, thinking about *ami-ami*. Two hours later the Great White Chief gathers up his assistants and boards a plane on whose sides are the words UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. Jim Cross, the pilot, turns on full power and we start to climb out over the blue-green bay, our obese, happy wards still waving on the strip below.

WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND: We come down over a windy harbor and find Governor-General Sir Bernard Fergusson, wearing a monocle, and Prime Minister Keith Holyoake waiting for us. Big bands, a ceremonial guard, thousands of people making thumbs-up signs along fence. Johnson delivers shoulder-to-shoulder speech: we were together in World War I, World War II (recounts own wartime experiences: flew with zero visibility into Auckland Bay, became ill in New Guinea, was cared for by New Zealanders on Fiji). Doesn't mention Vietnam—we have word that several hundred demonstrators are waiting for us downtown. The following day, as he is on his way to Parliament, demonstrators push through great friendly crowd to hold up banners reading STOP THE WAR. They chant—something firm but respectful, none of that Hey, Hey, LBJ stuff—and while officials make nervous apologetic sounds, Johnson turns around on the steps outside Parliament House and makes a "V" sign. Crowd behind the demonstrators roars. That's the stuff.

Next morning at five, shaving in a bathroom I share with Underwood, I hear a woman's voice in his room. "Oh, sir, that's really too nice." Underwood: "Well, you've been so good to me, I want you to have it." Woman: "I'll always treasure it, sir." Underwood: "Now maybe you'll take care of my friend Mr. McPherson next door." "Oh, indeed I will, sir." Criminy. Five in the morning, maybe three hours before we get breakfast on the plane, and Underwood's sending . . . There is a knock at the door. I open it and find a big plain girl in a maid's uniform holding out a silver tray with muffins, jam, and tea upon it. I take it gratefully and notice that her right hand is firmly clasped about an LBJ ball-point pen.

CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA: Are all planned capitals handsome and dull? I hear Brasília is; Washington was at the beginning and for a long time thereafter. Canberra's streets are wide and empty. Its shrubs are clipped. Its vistas are logical ("You see, the war memorial is the apex of a triangle that begins at Parliament . . ."). It is spacious and sane and altogether as exciting as a size twenty flowered print dress—of which there are many in evidence.

Johnson draws a big crowd in Sydney. A few demonstrators break through to throw paint on his car. That becomes *the* news of the Australian trip; not the tens of thousands yelling, "Good on you, Lyndon!" but the red paint exploding on the car and on millions of television screens and retinas, spreading out until nothing else can register.

He makes a good many extemporaneous speeches, which become progressively richer with the imagery of World War II. You stood fast! . . . while just across the Owen-Stanley Range in New Guinea the enemy waited to give the knockout blow. (Listening, I remember the face of the Zero pilot in the movies, fiendishly grinning to his wingman and pointing downward to where the big red cross marked the hospital.) The survivors of that thwarted Japanese Army are now our best trading partners and the Bulwark of Asian Democracy. Glad we aren't stopping there.

Night at Brisbane Airport. Johnson takes a speech I wrote on the plane and mounts a floodlit platform. Our local consul, reading a copy, chokes with horror. Johnson is to say, "I am told that something like a million Americans passed through Brisbane during World War II." That has a special libidinal meaning for Australians. It is certain to provoke knowing laughter among the women and grinding of teeth among the men. I alert Moyers, who runs up to cross out the sentence just in time.

MANILA: We are escorted over Manila Bay by a squadron of Philippine Air Force F-4's, flying terrifyingly close to our wing tips. You can see the pilots' faces. I think of all those speeches about how Asians can take responsibility for their own defense, if we only give them the means. Well, there they are, about to knock off one of our wings with the means we gave them. One must have faith. Men of all races can fly F-4's thirty yards from your wing tips. At last they peel off and we land. Better to talk about Asia's defense on the ground.

The humidity is oppressive. How can anyone work here? Broad faces, the smell of poverty, stucco peeling from the buildings along the bay. The country is sinking under the weight of graft and official corruption and wet air. The murder rate is so high that customers in the bars are asked to check their guns before entering. In a hotel elevator, I stand next to a wispy man under whose shiny black suit bulges a small automatic. I suppose the Secret Service agents, Clint Hill and Rufus Youngblood, can handle him, or anybody else; but he is part of an atmosphere of simmering violence that makes me nervous and ill tempered. It affects others in our party. One of them, drunk and enraged by a crowd of leftist students picketing our hotel, drops a water bomb out the window. Like the offshore cannon shot into Africa in *Heart of Darkness*. Johnson is sore when he hears about it and has somebody admonish the aide.

At sunset I talk to several Filipino scholars who've been invited to the embassy. One says his people

have no identity. The Spanish made them Catholic and antimaterialist, and we made them democratic and venal. We should not have left until we showed them how to prosper and run a good government. Another says we should never have come. Better to have left them untouched by Western values, another Sarawak or Borneo. I look out through the grill of a French window onto Manila Bay. Horizon and distance are indistinguishable in the glowing saffron light. I can just make out the silhouette of a freighter, weightlessly at anchor in the bay. A launch moves slowly toward it. Maybe to loot it, with the cooperation of its crew. Hundreds of millions of dollars in goods are expropriated out there each year. An informal aid program, with a highly restricted list of beneficiaries.

BANGKOK: Early one evening, I take a speech to Johnson's quarters in the Palace. He is asleep. I wait in an elegant parlor outside. French provincial furniture beneath a high domed ceiling. Maybe Anna slept here, between classes for the king's children. I'd like to. I am tired and rumpled from a month of travel.

Johnson wakes up and goes in to shave. In the center of the bathroom is a sunken bath, four feet deep and ten feet long. The spigot is a water-buffalo head in silver. I tell him that would go well in Texas. Hmmp, he says. We sit down with the speech. It is speech-writer Ben Wattenberg's draft for the university next day. Johnson is easy and patient, trying to be interested in one more collection of words to be spoken before another foreign audience. Mrs. Johnson comes in and gently reminds him that the state dinner is at eight, ten minutes from now. He thanks her and returns to the speech. She comes back in ten minutes, growing more concerned. The king and queen will be waiting at the foot of the stairs below. He looks at her for a long time. Then he asks, "What are they going to do?" Good question. At length he stands up and is zipped into his formal clothes by his valet. There's one good reason for being President. I start to leave, but he has more to say about the speech, and the three of us go out toward the stairs. The young king and his pretty wife wait pleasantly below. We start down the steps between rigid guards-at-arms. Halfway down, Johnson turns and hands me the speech. Then King and President meet warmly and walk toward a receiving line. In my wrinkled suit I stand between the drawn swords and marbled eyes of the guards, feeling that I should issue an order.

Stag dinner next night. I sit across from a prince who had parachuted into Thailand with a CIA team during the Japanese occupation. Tough old bird. He thinks Thailand ought to send many more troops to Vietnam. What do the Thai people think about that? He asks me to repeat the question. When I do, he looks at me quizzically, as if the idea had not occurred to him.

"The Thais accommodate," says a man in our embassy. "To the French, the British, the Japanese, and



Harry McPherson and Lyndon Johnson. May, 1968

if necessary to the North Vietnamese and the Chinese. They don't think the last is necessary now, so long as we are willing to supply arms to them and treat them as protected property under SEATO. They haven't been anybody's colonial possession for a thousand years, but they've accommodated."

So much for history. I have a toast to write. "Tonight we stand as allies in a common cause. At this very moment, Thai forces are assisting the South Vietnamese in their struggle against armed aggression alongside the forces of the United States of America."

Next day we leave Bangkok. The streets are lined with Chinese lingerie shops, Honda agencies, and gigantic movie ads—in one of which a looming black-shirted hero, gun in each hand, looks very much like Marvin Watson. We hustle along the AID-built highway toward the airport. Water buffalo—live ones this time—stand knee-deep in the rice paddies. Frail children look up beside them, open-mouthed as ten great limousines rush by at seventy miles an hour. And then go back to switching the buffalo. There is another world out there, beyond the Palace and the imaginary garden of my speeches.

Presidents are called upon to speak too often, manufacturing words of no lasting significance for gatherings of little consequence to them. There is a Gresham's Law of Presidential Rhetoric, that too much of it spoils the effect of all of it. In defiance of that law, wherever the President moved, microphones were set up, crowds invited, the press alerted, and a speech-writer assigned to produce appropriate language. Even if the speech was tolerably good, it was quickly forgotten; the President climbed back into his plane, the press boarded its own, and his words and audience vanished quickly.

I went with Johnson to Bonn for Adenauer's funeral, and wrote not a word. That was a ceremonial gathering of the Western chiefs, and the somber

drama of their rites—the Mass in Cologne Cathedral; the flotilla of ships, one bearing Adenauer's body, heading south against the Rhine's current, their red, black, and yellow streamers clear in the twilight—made presidential prose inadequate.

Perhaps it always was before a foreign audience, unless one could call on a magic phrase—like Kennedy's "*Ich bin ein Berliner*"—to convey something deeper than an idea, something that touched the immediate interests and emotions of the crowd. In El Salvador in 1968, Johnson spoke at a teachers' school out in the country. I had visited the school the day before and talked with several students, none of them older than twenty, who would soon be leaving to teach in the mountain villages. I tried to reflect what I heard from them in the speech. "The starvation of education—with its third-class citizenship for teachers, its narrow circle of students, its dull, mechanical drilling of facts into young minds . . . [it] was never good enough. It is a prescription for disaster today." The new teachers were going to use educational television, and so they would not be cut off from the intellectual resources in the capital and elsewhere in Central America. But the teachers themselves were the indispensable elements, the liberators; as the Salvadoran anthem had it, "In each man there is an immortal hero," and it was their task to release the hero in each village child.

As the speech went on, the students became restive—still polite up front, talkative and boisterous toward the back, Johnson's words and the rapid flat translation falling upon them like annoying moths in the sultry air. I walked out and looked at the black earth and the ring of mountains about us, and wondered what I might have written that would have interested them; that would have bridged the chasm between young Central Americans headed for a life of respectable poverty in the villages and the American President, whose cars and agents stood waiting to speed him away to Washington.

Maybe words could not do that. John Kennedy

might have done it through personality: young, elegant, Catholic, liberal, he was what they dreamed of being. Robert Kennedy, by identifying with those who stood for change in Latin America—the dissident clergy, the intellectuals, the political opposition—expressed the students’ impatience with their society more effectively, and more safely, than they could themselves. But Presidents, unlike senators, could not take up the opposition’s cause during official visits abroad—if, indeed, they wished to. They were stuck with “appropriate” rhetoric, and that, unless it was infused with personal magnetism, did not translate to the foreign heart.

Many people find it disappointing that Presidents employ speech-writers. It disturbs them that they can never be sure whether the man whom the majority elected, or some faceless assistant known but to God and his associates, has composed a famous presidential metaphor. But (1) if Presidents wrote the drafts of all that they were required to say, they would have little time left for the main business of their office—that is, governing; (2) Presidents do not ordinarily speak, or write, presidentialese—that exalted language in which, custom has it, great public issues should be discussed; (3) speech-writers do not last unless they have a good idea of what their Presidents wish to say; (4) when it counts—when the President is preparing a major address—the final product usually belongs more to him than to his writers.

It was part of the speech-writer’s code that he should not assert his authorship of what the President said. A knowing shrug was permissible, but only just. When John Kenneth Galbraith and several other contributors to President Kennedy’s speeches began to claim credit for particular lines in them, Art Buchwald wrote an urgent message to the director of the National Parks. Watch out for a tall, thin man with a chisel in his hand, Buchwald warned, especially if he gets near the Kennedy gravesite. The clear implication was that “Ask not what your country can do for you” might soon be followed by “J. K. Galbraith, 1961.”

But it was impossible for some presidential writers to conceal themselves behind a screen of anonymity. Richard Goodwin, who was probably the best writer to serve a President since Roosevelt’s day, did not bother to try. He saw his role as far more than that of a creative amanuensis; he meant to influence the direction of government. His advice to me, before he left the White House, was to wait until the last possible moment before submitting a draft to the President and the bureaucracy. In that way, he said, you can make your ideas almost a *fait accompli*; there will be no time for them to secure an alternative draft, and they must bargain with you to temper what you’ve written—instead of your arguing at the end for a bold variance from accepted policy. By the

time I became Johnson’s principal speech-writer, there was little range for striking initiatives. My job was to make staying with it in Vietnam and in the ghettos sound compelling and necessary.

I drew on many sources for speech drafts, chiefly on material supplied by the departments. There, buried in language that human beings never use except in communicating between large institutions, were the outlines of policy. I tried to turn them into presidentialese.

That was a strange dialect, meant to fix in the listeners’ minds the impression that something profound and memorable had just been said. It made heavy use of alliteration to catch their attention. Two examples, neither of them mine: “[The Dominican people] want, as we do, an end to slaughter in the streets and brutality in the barrios.” Second, about the Middle East: “This is a time not for malice, but for magnanimity; not for propaganda, but for patience; not for vituperation, but for vision.” I was told that Johnson admired this sort of thing; I thought it put up a wall between him and his audience, and made him—already the artful politician—seem the more contrived.

Roosevelt could explain a complicated question of economics by telling a simple story. Johnson, trying to simplify, was often painfully artificial: “I have talked to you about a six-point program . . . Food—that is ‘F.’ Recreation—that is ‘R.’ Jobs and wages and income—that is ‘I.’ Education—that is ‘E.’ Increased social security, Medicare, and nursing homes for older folks—that is ‘N.’ And a strong nation that will defend us and help us get peace—defense—that is ‘D’ . . . that spells ‘friend.’”

Still, he was often at his best when extemporizing. Nothing Goodwin or I ever wrote for him compared with a talk I heard Johnson make one morning years before in Abilene, Texas, to a group of REA district managers. While he ate a bowl of oatmeal, they told him about their problems with the banks and the Department of Agriculture. Johnson finished his breakfast, and in a low, compelling voice, advised them that they should join with the unions, the home builders, and all others who needed low interest rates. Separately their power was inadequate; together they would force the government into lowering the rates. The idea of uniting with Walter Reuther and David Dubinsky, as Johnson recommended, must have seemed strange to those West Texas farmer-managers, but they cheered him vigorously.

Most of what Presidents say passes unremarked into the obscurity of the archives. Unless the occasion itself is momentous, hardly a paragraph survives a copy editor’s desk. For a speech-writer, the trick is to find an arresting phrase, something that is “news” in itself and will not embarrass the President later on. Some writers can do that almost automatically, whatever the subject. I

needed to care; autointoxication did not work for me: I had to hate somebody, some idea or condition, and hope that a compelling phrase would suddenly appear on the page without design. Writing about the death of Mrs. Liuzzo at the hands of the Klan, I put down "hooded band of bigots" almost before I knew it, the words squeezing out of rage and contempt; that afternoon they were across every front page. The same emotions produced headlines for an election-eve statement in 1966: "White backlash is dangerous because it threatens to vest power in the hands of second-rate men whose only qualification is their ability to pander to other men's fears." In an AFL-CIO speech in 1967, "wooden soldiers of the status quo," referring to Republicans in Congress, caused a stir. Maybe the lesson was not so much that rhetorical art came from real feelings as that attacking anyone from a presidential platform was guaranteed coverage in the press.

Writing a political speech is hard work. Television spots are reducing political issues to subliminal clichés, but there are still fund-raising events where Presidents are expected to ring the familiar changes. The pressure is on the writer—so he thinks—to produce classic effects. The models for Democrats are Bryan's "Cross of Gold" speech, Roosevelt's "Rendezvous With Destiny," Truman's giving 'em hell.

In fact, speeches before Democratic dinners were often little more than recitations of achievements before a dazed crowd of party-goers. I remember a dinner in the late fifties, at the Washington Armory, as the nadir of political communication. There was supposed to be one principal speaker. Five other men were to make brief remarks. As it happened there were six speeches, each half an hour long. By midnight, the audience had dwindled to a few hundred. Garbage trucks drove onto the floor at both ends of the cavernous hall, and waiters, many of them staggering from leftover booze, began tossing plates, glasses, and food onto the truck beds. Majority Leader John McCormack chose that moment to survey the Republican legislative record during the Eighty-sixth Congress. "On the farm bill," he said, in his flat Boston voice, "one hundred fifty Republicans voted to recommit, while only thirty-six . . ." From a table of South Carolinians directly in front of McCormack, a tall man in a summer tux swayed to his feet, tucked a bottle under his arm, and shouted, "*Jee-sus Chrahst!*"

Democratic politicians traditionally broke the bonds, struck the shackles, lifted up, gave new hope, made possible. "They"—the Republicans and other skeptics—thought we would fail, fold, give up, but "they" had another think coming. We had not come this far to quit in sight of our goal. Answer the following rhetorical question: Shall we quit trying to feed the poor, train the uneducated, heal the sick, just because it is hard and costly? (One hoped for a chorus of "No's," but usually there was only silence. By 1967, one was satisfied if no one yelled "Yes!") Of

course it was hard; but we would win because the people loved us for what we had tried to do. In the great tradition of Franklin D. Roosevelt! Harry S. Truman! And so on.

Johnson stumping was the best of all—when he was good. He made a political speech in Morgantown, West Virginia, shortly before the 1968 election. He had a brief text, but his juices were flowing and the audience was appreciative, so he spoke for more than an hour, flavoring politics with country tales. "We like this democracy so much, this freedom so much, we want everybody to have a little taste of it. It is like the fellow who had a few too many drinks. He came home, and he got to sleep and woke up in the middle of the night. His mouth was burning and he said to his wife, 'Get me some ice water.' And she got the pitcher of ice water and brought it to him and he took a drink. Then he said, 'Honey, this is so good, go wake up the kids and give them some of it.'"

That kind of story might not travel well. Certainly it was not meant for national television. But it had the color and smell of life, in a way that prepared rhetoric did not. It came very close to representing the man himself, and that, after all, was what people wanted to see, whether they supported or hated him.

Political speech-writing is never good enough. It never matches what a good politician can do with the right metabolism, the right relationship between himself and an audience. But it is usually necessary—not just to give the politician a frame to build on, but to lay out what he thinks or hopes his people believe.

Somewhere in every serious political speech are the markers by which a party defines its course. Their colors run back to Jefferson and Hamilton, to Rousseau and Hobbes and the old debates over man's capacity for sensible judgment. They are cast in either/or terms: crime results either from murderous living conditions or from the society's unwillingness to impose firm sanctions on antisocial behavior; poverty is either a social crime of the rich or a psychological failure of the poor; prosperity should trickle down or bubble up.

Inevitably the distinctions that bring the loudest cheers at political dinners seem the most inadequate and simplistic the next morning. Sober, thinking people do not see the world in either/or terms. Everything is true in life; energetic choices are made in a storm of contradictions. Political words offer a rationale for otherwise chaotic events. They help to unite people of very different sensibilities behind common policies, and thus they help government to function. But they rarely give an accurate reflection of reality. Their writers, joining in (and sometimes leading) the applause that follows their ringing phrases, can easily forget that. And communicating fairly and precisely is not the only question. Out beyond the convention centers and the Hilton hospitality rooms, beyond the cars pulling up with lobbyists and their clients, are citizens whose problems do not yield to any words at all. □

I WANT TO TURN TO THE SOUTH: 1941

by Pablo Neruda

Translated by Andrew Glaze

From a sickbed in Veracruz I remember a day
of the South in my country, a silver-plated day
like the quickest fish in the waters of heaven.
Loncoche, Lonquimay, Carahue, whose heights
are barren, ringed around with silence and roots,
watchmen from their thrones of leather and timber.
The South is a great horse sunk like a stone
crowned with slow-moving trees and rocks,
as though lifting his green snout hanging with waterdrops.
The shade of his streaming tail is a great archipelago
and in his intestine sprouts the miraculous coal.
Will you never more give me, darkness, never more, oh, hand,
never more foot, threshold, thigh, my struggle—
to startle the forest, the highway, the ear of wheat,
the mist, the cold, which like azure decides
which one of your ceaseless steps shall accomplish itself?
Sky, summon up a day when I move through star on star
trampling the light like fireworks, wasting my blood
till I come to the nest of the rains.

I ask to go
back of the musky timber of the River
Tolten, let me pass by the men manning the saws,
and enter cantinas my feet soaked with water,
guard me past the light of the hazelnut's electricity,
lay me out full-length in the excrement of cattle
to die and revive gnawing at the wheat.

Ocean, bring me
a day of the South, a day gripped in your waves,
a day of wet mast, brought by a wind
of azure, out of the pole, to my ice-bound banner.

SILVER IN THE COLD TWILIGHT

A story by H.L. Mountzoures

One autumn afternoon, when no one else was home, Philip tried to console his mother. He was very small and thin for eleven. Standing beside her, talking softly, he said, "You know, you're the best mother in the world. I wouldn't want any other, no matter how you are."

She snatched a bread knife from the stove and hit him on the top of the head with the blade. The blow was sudden and numbing.

He fell down on the linoleum beside the stove, pretending that he was dead. Sunlight beat strongly through the top half of the kitchen window and warmed his face. He lay motionless for a long time. The bright light broke into sharp, glittering fragments as he wept without a sound. He wiped his eyes and lay with his face turned away from his mother. He examined the shiny metal ring and tan enamel curved leg of the stove, stared at the limp white gauze curtains that covered the bottom half of the window.

Finally, he got up. His mother didn't stir or speak. Arms crossed on her chest, she sat shrugging her shoulders and blinking in a severe tic.

There was a small dark spot near the stove leg. Philip touched his head and looked at his hand. Blood. Incredulous, he touched his head again. There was a small cut. He held his hand out toward her. She looked, showed no reaction.

After that, he never spoke to his mother or went near her.

He read all the sixth-grade books in the school library and then began to read more difficult ones. Arithmetic was easy. But he fooled around, and the teacher despised him.

"I'm not one of her pets," he said to Merton Talmadge, his school friend. "I do all my work, and it pisses her off. She wants me to be dumb. Well, the hell with her."

In school, the main hall smelled of wood polish and floor wax and donkey dust. Philip stood beneath a huge, beautiful Classical Greek bas-relief of crowded horses and riders every morning. With other children in the nurse's line, he had to take some thick brown gooey stuff from a spoon to make up for nutritional deficiencies.

Once, he was sent home with head lice. He hurried through the empty streets. Jesus. Everybody in the world was in school. As he passed the diner, the cook—dressed all in white—looked at him. Philip turned away. Near the Firestone garage, on the surface of a puddle, an orange, red, purple, and fierce-blue rainbow spread out gorgeously.

I have bugs.

He stared at the oily rainbow. When he got to the apartment, he went directly into the bathroom and turned on the hot-water valve in the tub. He took off his shirt, stood on his tiptoes, bent over. The scalding water ran through his hair. He stayed under as long as he could. He repeated this procedure every day for a week, and the tiny white translucent bugs disappeared.

Now, when he came home for lunch, his mother screamed, "Don't eat! Starve! Get out!" and she started toward him. After a while, he stopped coming into the kitchen. His brother Jimmy sneaked a sandwich to him out in the back hall, where he ate by himself, sitting on the top step, looking down a long flight of stairs. There was a broomstick sticking out of the slanted baseboard near the top landing. It was

always there. During other times of the day, coming and going, when he saw the broomstraw, a closed, empty feeling came over him. Yet he did not remove it—everything might come undone if he did. It was part of the chaotic ritual of his life. It was like not stepping on sidewalk cracks, trying to reach the corner before a bus passed in order to have a small whim satisfied, wishing on stars, praying to God.

He prayed to God every day that his mother would be all right again, the way she used to be. She was OK, slim and very beautiful, and she took care of him and his two big brothers, Tommy and Jimmy. Life was good. And then all of a sudden she had begun crying late at night and talking to herself, shouting to the walls. She stopped caring how she looked. She grew fat, and her long black hair hung down straight, and her dark eyes had deep circles around them. She shouted about Papa—that he didn't love her, that he slept with whores. He never said anything. He looked pale and thin and tired. He just went to work every single day, came home and made supper and went to sleep. She stopped cooking and cleaning and sat in the kitchen all day drinking coffee. She had lost her mind, she had given up, she was sick. What could be done? When Philip looked at her dirty dress, at her worried face, he prayed that she would get well and be happy again, that she would love them.

Yet nothing happened. She still screamed when she saw him—the mother who had given him baths, kissed him, sung songs, fed him. She shouted that he should starve. And she kept eating, and got fatter.

One day late in November, at lunchtime, Philip went in. Jimmy had coaxed him. "Aw, c'mon, Phil. She won't yell. You might as well try it—you can't eat out here in the hall all your life." He snickered.

"Yeah, but she'll hit me."

"No, she won't. You can move faster than her. C'mon."

Skinny as Jimmy was, he pulled Philip into the kitchen. As soon as Mama saw him, she got excited and began to shout. "Get out, you little bastard! I don't want you here!"

Philip stood still. "I won't get out," he said. "It's my house, too! I have to eat! Leave me alone!"

"Don't eat! Get out! Starve!" She moved toward him.

Suddenly, Tommy got up from his corner of the table and stood between his mother and brother.

"Mama!" he said. "*Leave Philip alone.*"

"Get out of my way," she said.

"No. You've got to stop bothering him. He never did anything to you. For Chrissakes, Ma, *please* leave him alone."

His mother stood still. She looked into Tommy's eyes and she understood something. She looked at the floor. And she sat down.

How odd. Tommy seldom spoke in the house, and never to his mother. Yet he had calmed her. It was more than Philip had ever been able to do. He watched Tommy eating—the thin, dark stranger, and he loved him.

But Philip could not bring himself to stay. She kept looking at him. She might kill him. He went out into the back hall. In a few minutes, Jimmy came to the door.

"Why are you out here again?" he said.

"I could never eat in there."

"The hell with you, then. *Baby.*" Jimmy went back into the apartment, slammed the door.

Philip sat on the top step.

What'll I do now? It's too early to go back to school. Just wait a little while, and then leave.

The door opened. Jimmy handed him a hot fried egg sandwich. "Here," he said.

Philip took the sandwich. He sat holding it.

"Well. Eat it, for Chrissakes!" Jimmy said.

Philip took a bite. Jimmy sat down beside him. "Don't worry," he said. "She doesn't mean it, you know. Remember how she used to be? It's not really her."

The words made Philip's throat ache.

"Later I'll buy you a soda," Jimmy said.

Tears slid out of Philip's eyes. He stood up, threw the sandwich. The egg splattered against the wall. "I don't *want* no fucking soda!" he shouted. He ran down the stairs.

In school that afternoon, he tried to forget.

Well, she can't help it. After all, she's crazy.

The teacher told him to stop daydreaming.

Toward the end of the afternoon, during music period, Merton Talmadge leaned close while they were sharing a music book. He said, "You wanna go fishin' after school?"

Singing, Philip nodded. It was a perfect idea.

Merton was considered bad, and he wasn't very intelligent. He played hooky, smoked cigarettes, told grown-ups to go to hell, stole toys from the five-and-ten. Tommy and Jimmy both warned Philip to keep away from him, because he was no good.

In spite of everything people said about Merton (even the teacher called him uncouth and insolent), Philip liked him. Merton never said anything mean about anyone, and he once said, "I feel sorry for your mother." Maybe it was because of his own mother. Every time Philip went to Merton's house, Mrs. Talmadge was drunk. Always, when they got to his front hall, Merton said, "Wait here," until he was ready. Then, through the wall, Mrs. Talmadge raved at her son: "Get some coal! D'you go to school today? You better had. I'm sick of that goddamn nosy truant officer. You're like your father. No good son of a bitch!" Merton always waited for Philip in *his* hall, too, and no doubt he heard Mama shouting. The boys never asked each other about it.

Music period ended. After school, they walked to Merton's house on Vine Street. It was a narrow street

with close square wooden tenement houses, dirty children playing on the sidewalks, bare yards. Philip felt grit beneath his sneakers. There were ashes on the sidewalk studded with bits of glittering black coal, water running through.

In his hall, Merton said, "Wait here." In a little while, after his mother's complaints, he emerged with two bamboo poles, a pail, and a grease-spotted paper bag half full of jelly doughnuts. "I swiped them," he said. "She'll never know the difference."

"Where do you wanna go?" Philip asked.

"City pier."

"Nah. They never bite there. Let's go down the cove in back of the coal yard."

Eating the white, sugary doughnuts, they walked down Olive Street, through the alley next to the Palace Theater, to the coal yard. They sneaked past the watchman's shack, walked between mountains of black shiny silt, crossed the railroad tracks, and reached the river.

The water was blue, choppy. The boys buttoned up their coats; a light wind was blowing, and they were out in the open on the rocks. With old shells, they dug clams from the muck, cracked them with rocks, scraped out the meat, thrust hooks through the fleshy part, and dropped their lines into the river. They sat on a boulder together in silence.

Slowing as it came into town, a mud-spattered dull-green train chugged behind them, parallel to the river. Squawking gulls rose and fell on the wind. Periwinkles were knocked loose and plopped from the boulder into the water as Philip swung his feet. The sun was setting, and the water broke into dancing orange spangles.

Merton caught two tommycods but threw them back in, because they are too bony to bother eating.

"Let's go," Philip said, shivering.

"Yeah. They ain't bitin'."

The water turned gray, with black patches.

Suddenly, Philip felt a tug. He pulled his line up out of the water. A small whiting danced madly up over his head and glittered.

"A whitey!" Philip shouted, and he brought it down behind him, Smack! on the rocks. "Jesus, Mert, look at 'im. He must be a foot!" He jumped up, leapt over the rocks. "God, he's a beauty!" The fish stopped and stared up at Philip as he squatted to take it off the hook. Then it started wiggling again, powerfully. Philip squeezed it with his numb hands to make it stop. Merton looked at it casually. The fish stopped. Philip stood above it.

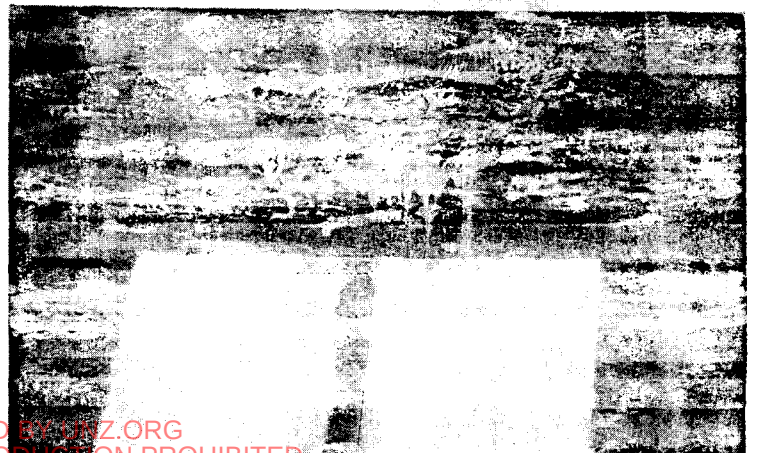
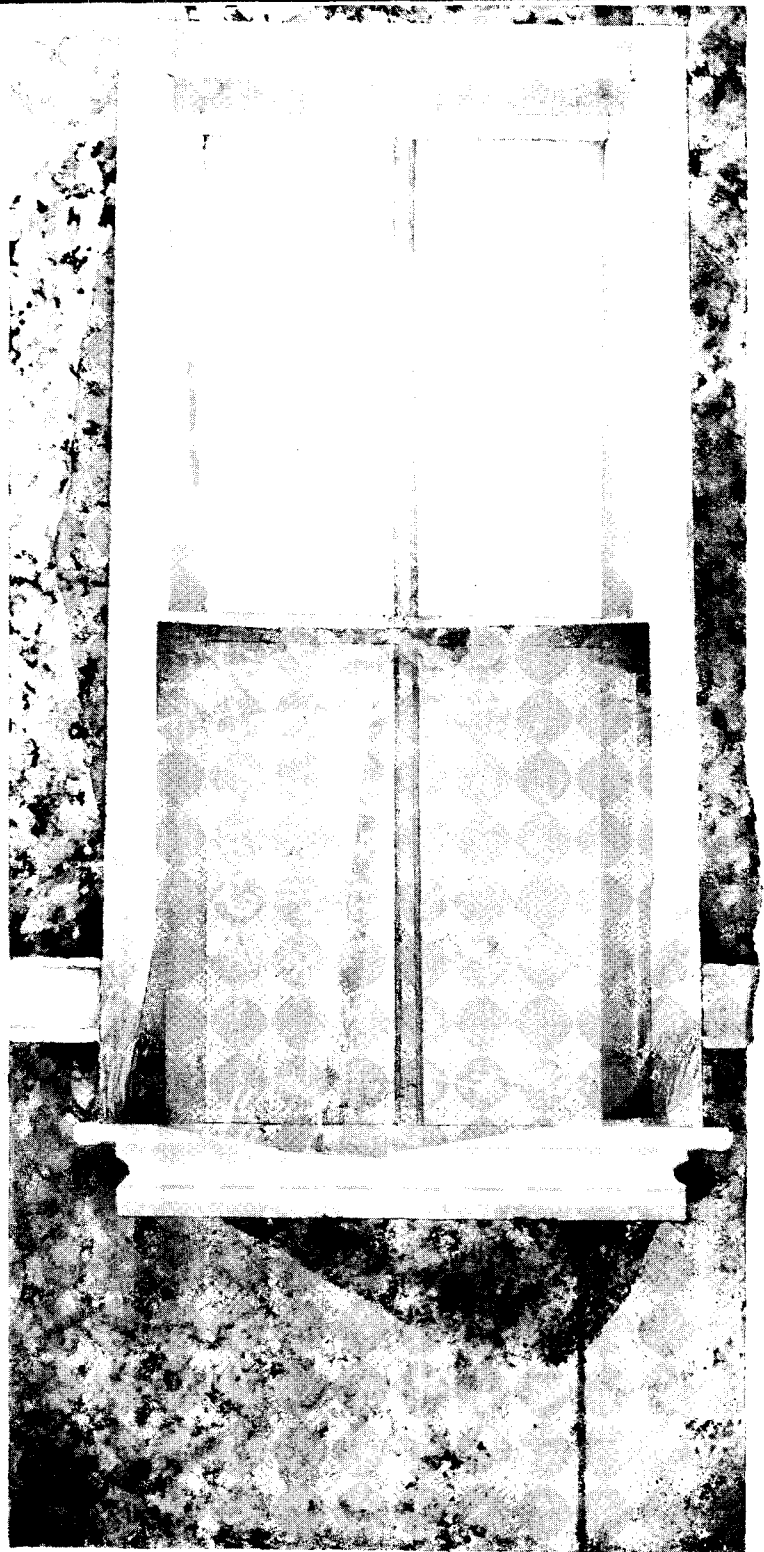
"Shit, you'd think you got a whale," Merton said.

"It's bigger than any you ever caught."

"Let's get outa here. I'm freezin' my nuts off." Merton's blue eyes were watery, his cheeks red, his fine, blond hair flying.

As they walked through town, Merton leaned over the pail and said, "He is a big bastard."

At Vine Street, Merton said, "I gotta go in for supper. Wait here."



"I should go home and eat, too."

"Naah. Wait, and then after, I'll wait for you."

Philip left the fish in the pail on the porch. Inside, in the gloomy hall, he stared at the faded mauve-flowered wallpaper. A peeling silver radiator hissed next to him. Mrs. Talmadge was whining and drawling through the wall.

Mama. He shook his head. Why? Why? Lunch-time. The scene projected on Merton's wall like a movie with no sound.

In ten minutes, Merton appeared. He said, "I snuck you some food. You won't have to go home an' eat, so we'll have more time to screw around." He gave Philip some food wrapped in a paper napkin.

Philip began to protest, but then he saw the movie on the wall. He shut up and opened the napkin. There was a fried pork chop between two pieces of white bread, and a battered piece of chocolate cake. "Thanks," he said, and he ate everything.

It was dark out when they left. Merton said, "Let's go to the USO." When they got there, they played Ping-Pong, begged a dime from a sailor and bought a Coke, watched the servicemen dancing. "Look. There's Miss Lawrence—she teaches second grade. I bet she does it!" They saw a movie upstairs.

"What a terrific night," Merton said.

Philip had forgotten about home. Now, out in the frosty air, he said, "I guess I better go."

"Christ. It's only ten. Let's go over the school-yard."

At school, they swung on naked maple-tree branches. They scaled the huge building's brick walls and windowsills, found their dark, silent classroom on the first floor. They could just about see the desks.

"Prison," Merton said.

Philip pressed his lips hard against the window-pane.

Back on Vine Street, he said, "I gotta go home."

"Aw, crap. You always gotta go home. Let's play a couple games of poker in my hall. Just a couple."

At Merton's, Philip looked through the window at the clock. "Jesus!" he said. "I *really* gotta go home. You lied, you bastard. It's eleven o'clock."

"No later than usual."

"My father will kill me. So long, Mert."

"Hey. What about your fish?" Merton said.

"Oh. Thanks." Philip took it out of the pail, picked up a piece of newspaper, and wrapped it. "See ya," he said, and took off.

The stars flashed above, streetlights made deep shadows. Philip ran through the empty streets, his breath rising in icy puffs, his mind racing: Papa said to keep away from Merton. "I'll use the strap on you if you go near him." (Past the Chinese restaurant, the bare magnolia tree.) Suppose he's waitin' up for me (dead peonies in the lame lady's driveway). Then I'll

have to say where I was. (Diner and garage. Behind the garage, complete darkness.) What was that noise? There must be a million stars. I'll make somethin' up. Christ, another noise—murderers? Run, don't stop now. It don't matter anyhow, she'll yell as soon as I get in the door. Ah, the yard. Light. (Up the cement steps, across the wooden porch. Clomp, clomp—back hall: click.) Crap. No light.

He gripped the newspaper package and ran up the stairs as fast as he could. He didn't have his key. Luckily, the door opened when he turned the knob. He walked through the hall into the kitchen.

Mama glanced at him but didn't speak.

He went into the dining room. His big brothers were at the table putting a jigsaw puzzle together.

Jimmy said, "Where the hell you been? We been waitin' up for you."

"Up Gerald Mahoney's, playin' Monopoly. I didn't know it was so late. You know how long that game takes. I lost track of the time. Is Papa sleepin'?"

"Yeah. You can consider yourself lucky."

Philip unwrapped the fish. "Look," he said. "Look at the whitey I caught this afternoon behind the coal yard."

"Nice," Jimmy said.

Tommy said nothing.

"You better go to bed," Jimmy said.

"OK. Soon as I clean it."

He went to the pantry and with a paring knife scraped and cleaned the fish in the sink. He wrapped up the guts and scales in the newspaper and discarded them in a pail under the sink. Then he ran cold water through the fish.

He turned in the kitchen doorway. The wet fish shone in the dull light. He would put it in the icebox, and they could eat it tomorrow.

His mother was looking at the floor, and her expression changed for a second. Something kind and deeply intelligent flickered over it, something from the time when he was very little.

She was not here. She was far away. Then she came back. The heavy secret of her illness lifted from her dark eyes. She was almost smiling.

He walked over to her, and he wanted to say, "I caught this fish for you." But he didn't talk.

She looked at him. He stood a few inches from her chair. He touched her arm. He wasn't *afraid* of her. Even if she never got better, she was OK.

"Here," he said, and he put the fish on the stove.

He went to his room, snapped on the light, and undressed quickly. The frying pan clanged on the stove in the kitchen. He shivered. It was always cold in the winter in his room. As he was taking off his sneakers, he heard a loud sizzle when the fish touched the hot oil.

He got into bed and pulled the covers up over him. The last thing he thought about was the fish at the moment he had caught it—flapping up over his head, bright, silver in the cold twilight. □

**"IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE
THERE ARE MANY MANSIONS—
AND I'M GOING TO GET ME
SOME OF THEM TOO"**



**The Story of the Contract Buyers League
by James Alan McPherson**

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"... every human being's life in this world is inevitably mixed with every other life and, no matter what laws we pass, no matter what precautions we take, unless the people we meet are kindly and decent and human and liberty-loving, then there is no liberty. Freedom comes from human beings, rather than from laws and institutions."

—Clarence Darrow

Summation to jury in the trial of Henry Sweet, Detroit, 1926

I People and Houses

The way to Lawndale, on Chicago's West Side, is by el: a twenty-minute ride from the Loop to Pulaski Road, a twenty-minute ride back. In the early morning, and again in the evening, the cars running between the two sections of the city are packed with black workers. Airport attendants, maids, waitresses, janitors, truck drivers, factory workers: a cross section of the unskilled. These are people conditioned by urban living: nothing surprises them. In the rattling cars there is little laughter or talk, nor is there much complaining.

The community itself, Lawndale, is very much like any other black section of a major American city. About 180,000 people crowd into its 12 square miles. Whether it is called a ghetto or a community, the visible symbols remain the same: the sense of Elizabethan vitality and ferment painfully contrasting with the physical reality of spiritually dead loafers in colorful habits decorating the fronts of bars and stores and barbershops; children darting in and out of these shops or playing in gutters; mothers hauling plastic sacks of clothes to and from the laundromats, young women looking vacantly nowhere. The radio music which keeps it all alive blares into the street, sometimes overpowered by bull-voiced disc jockeys hawking cars and clothes and color televisions. Older women look down on the street, watching the children and just watching; a repossession notice, from downtown, floats along the pavement on the wind. The stylized movements of eyes and fingers and feet; the screaming colors; the pictures and posters of this year's politicians sloppily pasted over those from last year; the bourbon billboards; the uncleared lots and falling houses bearing the graffiti of resident groups—Vice Lords, Conservative Vice Lords, Disciples, Black Panthers. The storefront churches; the other houses struggling to survive; the sense of having seen it all or of having read about it all someplace before.

But something new and positive has started here that makes Lawndale more than just another ghetto. Along the streets intersecting Pulaski Road are hun-

dreds of old, but solidly constructed two- and three-flat houses which many of the residents hope to rehabilitate eventually. Tall, shabby, weatherworn brick structures, they suggest a stability that is foreign to the idea of a ghetto. Yet these houses, and the fight of Lawndale people to save them, are what make this particular ghetto a community and a symbol of national significance.

Sometime this year, amid the hoopla and glitter of the two national political conventions, the resurrection there of suppressed issues and the lavish promises for dealing with them, the fate of these people and their houses will be decided in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. Two court cases argued by white lawyers, *Baker v. F & F Investment* and *Clark v. Universal Builders*, represent four years of cooperative activity by the people of Lawndale on the West Side of Chicago, joined by other black families from the South Side of Chicago. The cases bind over three thousand black families and their homes to a difficult question which must eventually be answered by the courts: has a businessman the legal right to make a profit from a market created by racial discrimination where the buyer has no other place to deal?

The problem is common to every American ghetto. What has happened in Chicago has happened in other cities. But a popular movement to do something about it began in Chicago, and Chicago is the central stage on which the resultant drama is now coming to a climax.

Chicago is perhaps the most residentially segregated city in the country. Its reputation is based on a strong tradition of neighborhood towns or "ethnic states." Their people—Bohemians, Germans, Irish, Italians, Jews, Lithuanians, Poles—tended to settle together and defend their customs and their borders against newcomers. Black people were the ultimate newcomers. Lured up from the South by stories of higher wages, political freedom, the good life, they settled on the South Side and began testing borders.

By the end of World War I their own borders had been erected for them. Jim Crow ordinances and restrictive covenants were used to control any expansion. Specifically, the Chicago Real Estate Board's Code of Ethics cautioned: "A realtor should never be instrumental in introducing into a neighborhood . . . members of any race or nationality or any individual whose presence would be clearly detrimental to property values in that neighborhood." But the black influx continued, and by the 1940s the South Side could no longer accommodate the migrants. Sub-

A caller might simply say, "They're coming."

scribers to the American Dream, they wanted the stability symbolized by home ownership. Some jumped the borders and spilled over into wherever housing was available: East Chicago, Chicago Heights. Some went as far as Gary, Indiana, and sat waiting for a chance to move back. At the same time, many whites were moving into the suburbs.

In 1948 the United States Supreme Court ruled racially restrictive covenants judicially unenforceable. In 1950 the Real Estate Board dropped the words "race" and "nationality" from its code, but the policy remained the same. In the mid-1950s when urban renewal began its demolition and removal program in black slum areas, a number of "panic peddlers" seized on the U.S. Supreme Court's 1948 ruling to "open up" and "turn" white residential neighborhoods over to eager black buyers. For most poor black families uprooted by urban renewal, as well as for those seeking to get out of other overcrowded black communities, the choice was a simple one: accept segregated public housing, challenge segregationist practices in white ethnic neighborhoods and depend on police protection, or attempt to buy one of the solidly constructed homes rapidly becoming available through a combination of panic peddling and the exodus of white ethnics to the suburbs. Many poor black families, like those in Lawndale, chose to follow the blockbusters.

Between 1958 and 1961, most of the southern part of Lawndale passed from white to black occupancy, with little enough push from the blockbusters. Some merely hired black women to walk their children through white neighborhoods, or paid black men to drive noisy cars through an area a few times a day. Sometimes it was a telephone call for "Johnnie Mae." Another caller might simply say, "They're coming." The whites sold, many at prices far below the appraised value of their homes. And very shortly, sometimes within the same week, the houses would be resold to eager black families at inflated prices and at very high interest rates on installment purchase contracts. These contracts differ radically from the mortgages with which most Americans buy their homes. They are like a department store "easy-payment" plan.

The terms of the contracts (standard forms were approved by the Chicago Bar) allow the purchaser to take immediate possession of the property, but give him no equity or title until the full contract price is paid. The purchaser is obliged to pay specified installments on the purchase price over a period of years, the deed and title to the property to be delivered upon completion of such payments. Also, like the restrictive terms of a conditional sales contract,

the seller has the right to reclaim the property and to keep all past payments if a single payment is missed. Since the buyer's equity in the property does not build up, he cannot obtain a mortgage unless a specific mortgage provision is written into the contract. And while the buyer is obliged to pay for insurance, taxes, and all repairs on the property, the seller usually selects the insurance company and can collect all claims for damages to the property. Most policies cover only the sellers' mortgage interest, and not the contract value for which the property was sold. In many respects the contract buyer's rights are as minimal as those of a renter. (In some cases, less: at least in a landlord-tenant situation, the landlord is responsible for the upkeep of the building.) Besides the contractual advantages, many sellers were permitted under Illinois law to conceal their identities through the device of the land trust. While a title and trust company kept record titles, the beneficiaries, identified only by trust number, maintained complete control of the property. An additional advantage was provided by the swift remedies of the Illinois eviction law (see box, page 69).

Most realtors who purchased the homes from fleeing whites could get mortgage financing from the banks. But for purchasers like the Howell Collins family there was no such advantage. Mr. and Mrs. Collins, an elderly black couple, contracted to buy their duplex home in Lawndale on September 26, 1960. The seller had purchased the place one month earlier from a white family for about \$14,500, but sold it to the Collins family for \$25,500. The seller obtained a mortgage for \$12,000. The Collins family paid \$1500 down and signed a contract to pay the \$24,000 balance in monthly installments of \$191 (plus monthly deposits for insurance and taxes) at an interest rate of 7 percent for 19 years. Under the contract, they will pay a total of approximately \$45,000 for the building, including over \$19,000 in interest. If the Collinses had been able to get a mortgage and terms similar to those the realtor got, they would have paid a total of about \$20,000 for the home over a shorter period of time.*

But the roots of the situation go much deeper than panic peddling. These black families were forced to buy on contract because they were excluded from Federal Housing Administration mortgage backing—in contrast to the availability of FHA mortgages for

*These estimates are based on information provided by Collins in testimony before the Public Welfare Committee of the Illinois House of Representatives, and on the records of the Contract Buyers League.

Situations similar to Chicago's exist in every major American city where the black population has been shut off from the broader housing market and excluded from FHA-backed mortgages.

some blacks in some neighborhoods that have been black all along. From the FHA's creation in the 1930s, its policies, like those of the Chicago Real Estate Board, reflected a belief that property value in a residential area decreased when the residents were not of the same social, economic, and racial group. Besides including a sample restrictive covenant, the FHA underwriting manual of 1938 advised that "if a neighborhood is to retain stability, it is necessary that properties shall continue to be occupied by the same social and racial groups." Despite token reforms in this policy between 1947 and 1954, builders and lenders still remained free to make their own decisions. The agency's requirement that a building be judged "economically sound" before mortgage backing could be given favored new houses and not the used residential properties usually bought by black families. Finally, an FHA administrative procedure of "red-lining" black or changing areas of a city as "high-risk" placed another, circular restriction on potential black home purchasers: as soon as more than a token number of them moved into an area, the neighborhood could be labeled "high-risk" or "changing," and FHA backing of mortgages might terminate. Banks, savings and loan associations, the major homeowners' insurance companies—even the Veterans Administration—usually followed FHA guidelines.

Thus, besides being virtually restricted from the broader housing market, many black home buyers could not expect FHA backing of a mortgage if the purchased homes were not judged "economically sound" or if they were in areas designated "changing" or "high-risk." Despite the number of studies, beginning with Luigi Laurenti's *Property Values and Race*, which challenged the popular idea that "black people lower property value," these latter FHA policies did not change until after the 1967 riots, when FHA offices were instructed to consider all buildings in riot or riot-threatened areas as "acceptable risk." However, between 1938 and 1967 countless numbers of black home buyers who were unable to meet FHA requirements were obliged to rely on the use of installment purchase contracts.

Many Lawndale families, on the advice of lawyers, had signed contracts which would bind them to the houses without benefit of equity or ownership until the early 1980s. To meet the monthly payments some husbands worked at two and sometimes three jobs. Many wives were also forced to work, resulting in the destruction of their family life. Unsupervised children drifted into the street gangs in the area. In addition to the monthly payments, many buyers were

forced to pay for costly repairs on their homes as soon as the contracts were signed. One couple, it is reported, had been told by a seller that the building they purchased was free of building-code violations. Three weeks after the family moved in, a building inspector appeared and required them to spend another \$2500 to correct code violations.

In the period 1958–1961 more than one half the homes in Lawndale were purchased on contract. Chicago is not by any means the only city where black people have bought homes on contract. Situations similar to Chicago's exist in every major American city where the black population has been shut off from the broader housing market and excluded from FHA-backed mortgages. Baltimore is one; Washington, D.C. is another; Cincinnati is a third. In Baltimore, a grass-roots movement challenging similar practices sprang up about the same time the people of Lawndale began to organize. But the Chicago movement has gone the furthest, and the legal cases that have come to the point of resolution in Chicago are now the test cases for the country.

One day in early 1968, Mrs. Ruth Wells, a soft-spoken, attractive black woman in her mid-thirties, got up enough courage to go into a contract seller's office and ask why the sum of \$1500 had been added on to her contract balance for insurance. Three years later, her voice no longer soft, Mrs. Wells sat in the comfortably furnished living room of her home in Lawndale, and told a story that has now become fixed in black American folk history. "Before I left home that morning," she said, "I was very concerned over whether I was right or wrong. This has always been a problem with me: being afraid to really step out because I was afraid to be wrong. So I prayed a prayer before I left home that morning. I am not a real religious fanatic, but I do believe wholeheartedly in God because I feel that I would not have made it this far if not for a true and living God. That morning I went into my closet and closed the door to shut out everything. I asked the Lord to show me that day whether I was wrong between the time I left this house and returned. I said, 'If I'm wrong in expecting this man to do something, then I won't bother him anymore. But if I'm right, I want You to show me and I'll fight on.'

"When I got down there I asked to see the insurance policy. I said, 'You must have forgot! I don't live on North Shore Drive [an affluent white neighborhood]. I live in Lawndale. We don't have any mansions out there to be paying \$1500 for insurance. You

don't even pay that much a year in far better neighborhoods. I may be *living* here, but my *mind* didn't stop working after I started living here!" So the seller called the secretary and had her bring the policy. But when he went to pass the policy across the desk, his hand actually just trembled so until the paper was fluttering in the wind. And for him to shake so, not just from being nervous, this *had* to be something. I had forgot about the prayer, but the minute I saw his hand I *knew* I was right. It's as though someone had told me, 'Look!' *I felt so good!* When he offered to cancel the \$1500 I told him I had *changed my mind!* I got more *faith* sitting there in that man's office because I knew he was wrong and *he* knew he was wrong. I thought, 'Somebody done touched him and let him know. He's feeling something he's never felt before: *guilt!*' He's all trembling and shaking, really upset. And I thought to myself, 'I didn't upset him, but I know *who* did.'"

Mr. and Mrs. Wells bought the duplex for \$23,000 in 1959 from a real estate company. They paid \$3000 down and signed a contract which required them to pay the \$20,000 balance over a 15-year, 10-month period and which allowed them the option of obtaining a mortgage after 50 percent of the principal had been paid. This was done by late 1967. Mr. and Mrs. Wells then hired a black lawyer to negotiate the mortgage for them; but instead, he reported back that the seller would agree to the mortgage only after an additional \$1500 had been paid. "I asked him what the \$1500 was for," Mrs. Wells recalls. "He said he didn't know. Later he called back and said it was for insurance. Now, my contract itemizes my payments each month: insurance, taxes, principal, interest, and my total payment: \$201.40. Now, if I'm paying insurance in with the rest each month, I'm *not* in arrears with my payments. I was always before then normally a quiet person who wouldn't talk, especially to a stranger. But something just got in me and I was just fed up and tired. I don't care how hard I worked, how many hours I put in, I was still in the same boat."

Mrs. Wells was not alone when she went into the contract seller's office. More than six months before the confrontation, John Redmond Macnamara, a thirty-year-old white Jesuit seminarian, and twelve white students had moved into Lawndale. Macnamara, a native of Skokie, Illinois, and then a student at the Bellarmine School of Theology, had spent most of the previous year in the community on a one-day-a-week basis as a member of a service project sponsored by the Presentation

Roman Catholic Church of Lawndale. The community-service project was started by Monsignor John J. Egan, the new pastor of Presentation Church and then director of the Office of Urban Affairs of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago. Macnamara and the other Catholic students moved into an old apartment on South Independence, a few blocks away from the Wells home, and began to walk the streets of Lawndale. They had no program to present. Instead, following Saul Alinsky's example, they listened to the people with only three ideas in mind: to discover what problems were facing the community, to provide services for bringing people together, and once the machinery for an organized and developing community was set up, to move on.

During the summer of 1967, despite harassment and intimidation by young black men in the neighborhood, the young whites visited all the families in a twelve-block area and listened to what the people said. There were many complaints against exploitation by merchants, high tax payments, the absence of city services, the lack of play lots for community children, and a general disinterest on the part of the mayor's office in reports of building-code violations.

As an initial project, the whites enlisted the help of young black people from the area to stage public demonstrations. On one occasion nine full cans of uncollected garbage from Lawndale were "dumped" on the plaza of the downtown Civic Center; during the first three days of July, children from the area were taken to a public park in Bridgeport—home of Chicago's Mayor Richard J. Daley—and allowed to play. There were a few fines for littering, and some Bridgeport adults threw rocks and bottles at the white students and Lawndale children. But afterwards the city began regular garbage collections and constructed one children's play lot in Lawndale. But by September, when most of the students were returning to college, the project had accomplished little else.

Father Egan introduced Mrs. Ruth Wells to Jack Macnamara. An outspoken priest rigidly dedicated to serving the Lawndale community, Father Egan had helped Mrs. Wells on past occasions. "I called him," Mrs. Wells says, "and asked if he could recommend a lawyer I could trust. I wanted to find out what steps I could take because I knew that something was wrong. I told him, 'If this man could just put \$1500 on my bill out of the sky like this, I'll *never* finish paying. It's just like blackmail, only I don't know what I've been blackmailed for. If I pay this, he could add anything else he wanted. My own lawyer

didn't even question the \$1500. He just *arranged* how I could pay it.' I told Father Egan, 'If I let him get away with this, I'll be paying for the rest of my life for *nothing*! I don't have anything, and I'm steady paying.'"

That same day Father Egan sent Macnamara and Sister Andrew, who had ten years of real estate experience before becoming a nun, to see Mrs. Wells. Already somewhat knowledgeable about the contract sales pattern in Lawndale, they advised her to invest \$45 in an FHA appraisal of the house. The estimate came back at \$14,750. Between the time the family bought the house for \$23,000 and early 1968, they had had the bathroom modernized, redone the kitchen, built new back porches for both apartments and had them enclosed, rewired the entire house, put on a new roof, and put in new front steps and a sidewalk. The students did a title search of the property and found that the seller had paid about \$14,000 for it. They encouraged Mrs. Wells to talk with the contract seller. After several attempts to telephone him at his office and home, Father Egan, Macnamara, and Sister Andrew accompanied Mr. and Mrs. Wells to the seller's office. There they stood in the background and allowed Mrs. Wells to do the talking. "I let him know how much I had found out about the property," Mrs. Wells says. "And I told him that I knew he paid less than the amount of [the official mortgage] stamps on the deed. He is a smart man. I don't mean smart because he outsmarted me, because I don't feel that I'm smart."

Mrs. Wells says the seller explained that insurance had gone up over a period of years. She asked why she had not been informed before. "He said he didn't want to *worry* me," she says. "I got more angry then than I was before I went down there. See, he's clapping me on the back with one hand and picking my pocket with the other. He had decided to add this \$1500 on when he saw that we hadn't faltered and were going to get the building on mortgage. I asked him how he slept at night. He said he slept very well except when he had worked a little too hard at the office." Mrs. Wells pauses to laugh. "I'm sure he does," she goes on. "He's getting checks in the mail every month, educating his kids, and if you're ragged and hungry that's *your* business! But I told him *why* I thought he slept pretty good. He said when he got ready for spiritual advice he definitely would not come to me. I thanked him, and told him I wouldn't go to him either."

Then Mrs. Wells asked to see the policy.

Official records show that title to the Wells house was held by a local bank under a trust number. The couple paid \$3000 down and contracted to pay the

\$20,000 balance in monthly installments of \$175 for 15 years with a 7 percent interest rate on the unpaid balance, the maximum under Illinois law. The seller had purchased the property a little more than one month before by obtaining a mortgage for \$10,000 and paying the former owner \$3500 in cash. Two years later, after Mr. and Mrs. Wells had made improvements on the property, the seller refinanced and obtained a second mortgage for \$12,000. Although only about \$14,000 was originally paid for the property, and its appraised value in 1968 was only \$14,750, Mr. and Mrs. Wells will pay a total of \$36,250 for their home. Macnamara estimates that if they had been able to purchase the building on mortgage for \$14,000 and had made the same monthly payments at the same interest rates, they would have paid approximately \$21,000.

"We conducted about six weeks of research down at the Chicago Title and Trust Company," Macnamara says, "and discovered that about 50 percent of the buildings were being bought on contract by black people and that the prices of all these buildings were approximately the same, and that the sellers had picked these buildings up for \$10,000 to \$15,000 less than what they were being sold to black families for. What we did with this information was to go to people's homes to see if it was really an issue with them. We'd say, 'Did you know that the guy who sold you this house only paid \$13,000 for it?'"

But even if the buyers did not know, few of them would respond to Macnamara and the students. There is a stigma attached to contract buying, a certain implication of helplessness and ignorance. Public meetings were organized in the basement of Presentation Church, with twenty to twenty-five people in attendance. But they were silent. Few people wanted to expose their scars to a tall, blond white man with piercing blue eyes, surrounded by white helpers. "Jack would come by my house before every meeting on Wednesday nights," Mrs. Wells recalls of the early days, "but he wouldn't say anything. So I said to my husband, 'There's something he wants, but he won't say it.' My husband said, 'What do you think it is?' I said, 'He wants one of *us* to get up and talk.' He said, 'Well, what good would that do?' I said, 'The people don't trust them because they're white. But we're black and we're *in* it, and I feel sure all these other people might be in the same boat. But they won't say anything. They just sit there and *look*!' I didn't even know them then," she admits. "I didn't even know my next-door neighbor." Finally, Mrs. Wells volunteered to tell the people her story. At the next meeting she stood, held on to the back of a chair, and told them about her own contract situ-



*Above, a West Side neighborhood of Chicago.
Below, a buyer gets advice at the Contract
Buyers League office.
Right, a Wednesday night meeting of the League.
Lower right, children on a West Side lot.*





Ruth Wells

"I asked if any of them was in the same boat. Immediately practically every hand in the room went up with a question. And that's when the thing got started."

ation and about her confrontation with the seller. "I said that the money for the appraisal was the best forty-five dollars I ever spent," she says, "and asked if any of them was in the same boat. Immediately practically every hand in the room went up with a question. And *that's* when the thing got started. So then I would get up every Wednesday night and I would tell it: 'Tell your family and your friends, your neighbors, the people you work with, if they bought on contract they should come out!'"

Each Wednesday night thereafter we got more and more people. On some nights we didn't even have standing room. That's when I found out that up until a few years ago most of our sisters and brothers, not only in Chicago but in many major cities in the United States, bought on contract and were being cheated. I'm not talking about people with eighth-grade educations either. I'm talking about black people with *degrees!*"

The Contract Buyers League of Lawndale began in January, 1968, as part of the interaction between the meetings in the basement of Presentation Church and sessions in Macnamara's sparsely furnished apartment on South Independence Boulevard. Getting the estimated 3000 Lawndale contracts renegotiated became the issue for which the Presentation Church workers had been searching. The students set up filing systems in the apartment, and slowly gathered information. Other Jesuits and white college students passed through the apartment, and spread word of the organization. Contributions began to come in. At one Eastern girls' college the students gave up their lunch money for the League.

Young black men from the neighborhood, some of them gang members and others just curious, eased into the apartment, freeloading, disrupting, "raiding," threatening the whites. At one point gang members issued a deadline for the whites to be out of the community. The deadline came and passed, and the whites stayed on. During the riots following Martin Luther King's assassination, Macnamara's life was threatened, and one young black man did beat him severely. But when angry black people summoned the police, Macnamara refused to identify the attacker.

Thirty lawyers whose opinions were asked advised the League that nothing could be done. But the people made their own decision: they decided to picket the offices and suburban homes of the sellers and pressure them to renegotiate the contracts. The students traced the trust numbers on the deeds to the

beneficiaries. Once an identity was discovered, twelve or so people—Jesuits, nuns, students, and contract buyers—would picket the front of his office, or a few would go to his neighborhood and pass out leaflets to his neighbors explaining CBL grievances. In some instances they even met commuter trains as they rolled into suburban stations, carrying signs which told all passengers that their fellow commuter, Mr. X, was a slumlord.

Because they always informed the Chicago Police Department and the press before each picket attempt, there were no incidents of violence. The pickets were prepared to follow all orders from policemen and later submit any complaints to the Department's Human Relations Section. On a few occasions Chicago policemen accepted their leaflets. One very active white supporter likes to tell about the instance when one of the sellers threatened violence against the pickets. "The police came and the people had the experience that the law worked for them," he points out, "because the police told the realtor that they were there to protect the pickets and that he would be arrested if he continued to threaten them." The pickets also had the support of church and human relations groups, and a number of lawyers who advised them on the legal limitations of picketing. At one point, thanks to the presence of several FBI agents ordered to the scene by Thomas Foran, U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, they were even able to picket outside the General Federal Savings and Loan office in Cicero, Illinois. According to an article in the *Chicago Defender* entitled "The Day Cicero Didn't Riot," some of the Cicero citizens even accepted their flyers and wished them luck.

In the spring of 1968 the major publicity began. Soon after one seller made a tentative agreement to renegotiate three hundred of his contracts, the *Chicago Sun-Times* ran a small story called "Money Miracle in a Chicago Ghetto." And although the seller later refused to renegotiate, the publicity continued. The *Daily News*, giving an example of what Father Egan had termed "a vile race tax," ran a long story on the troubles of a family of buyers named Peeler, and the \$16,000 house that will eventually cost them \$46,780 in principal and interest. In early July, Macnamara, Mr. Howell Collins, and several other contract buyers testified before the Illinois House of Representatives' Public Welfare Committee, receiving extensive publicity. There was talk of federal indictments being brought against officials of ten defunct savings and loan associations for "possible misapplication of federally insured funds"; there was talk of drafting a bill which would require

the identities of land trust beneficiaries to be made public; there were suggestions of a link between contract selling and the crime syndicate, and urgings to require the sellers and savings and loan officials to testify before the Welfare Committee. But the political publicity, some of which was prompted by the heat of that election year, died down. The buyers took a new step. They began pressuring the Chicago FHA office, denouncing its policies as the basic cause of their housing difficulties and demanding that it intervene in the conflict. The Chicago office, headed by Ernest Stevens, was apparently embarrassed by the FHA's role in encouraging segregated housing. In the mid-sixties it had discontinued the "red-lining" policies. Just at the time the conflict broke, a campaigning Richard Nixon had guardedly criticized the role played by FHA in creating black slums. "The FHA is largely limited today to safe mortgages," he said. "It should be turned in the direction of taking greater mortgage risks so that it can function effectively in slum areas where now it does little."

Pressured by the buyers, the Chicago FHA office expressed a willingness to grant mortgages to the buyers, based on the current appraised value of the houses. But the CBL rejected the offer because it allowed the sellers to receive the full contract balances. According to Macnamara, the FHA offer protected the seller by "allowing him to get out of the deal and receive immediate cash after he has had the benefit of raking off the highest interest profits which come at the early stages of the installment contract." With the help of lawyers, CBL worked out its own "fair-price formula" based on the price paid by the seller for the property plus 15 percent of the cost, supposedly representing the amount of profit he should have received. But few of the sellers would agree to this method. Most were opposed to high settlements and what they termed the "shameful harassment" of them by the CBL.

Most of the men who hold the Lawndale contracts are Jewish real estate salesmen or assignees who regard contract selling as a legitimate business. Like most white merchants in black communities, many of them remained behind in Lawndale after the other whites left. The sellers take pride in their ability to read the contract sales market, and many regard themselves as suppliers of homes for people who were shut out of the broader housing market. Ironically, many of them enjoyed close relationships with their buyers, and occasionally "carried" families that fell behind in payments. The emotional and psychological depths of the seller-

buyer relationship might have been touched by one of the first sellers who agreed to renegotiate. "I like the people on the West Side," he says. "I was good to them. I lent them money, did them favors, and acted as a father-confessor to them. I didn't know I was doing any harm to them. My office wasn't hit during the rioting because they knew I was all right. When this CBL thing started, they went to another seller first. I never figured they would come to me because I didn't think I had done anything wrong. But they did. I couldn't believe it when they said I had cheated people. I went home to my wife and said, 'Isn't this the American system, where we make as much profit as we can?' She said, 'Yes, you're right.' Two days later she said, 'No, *you're* wrong and *they're* right.' And pretty soon I said to myself, 'No, *you're* wrong.'"

There are three classes of businessmen involved in the Lawndale contract sales situation: those who actually negotiated contracts and receive all the profits, those whose real estate offices act as agents for investors in contract sales, and those in investment firms who bought contracts from sellers at discount. It is unknown how many contract sellers were actually engaged in blockbusting. Of the thirty or forty known sellers and trust beneficiaries, only a few have large numbers of contracts. Most have three hundred or less. And while most were able to get mortgage financing and refinancing of their initial purchases, a few paid cash out of their own pockets. Some of them attempt to justify the markup in prices before resale to black families by insisting that they spent considerable money rehabilitating the houses; and some complain that the tendency of black families to wreck the houses or abandon them after short habitation periods added a high-risk element to the business. Some are lawyers. All the sellers insist that they sold, or would have sold, homes on equal contract terms to both black and white people. And like the buyers, most of them denounce banks and the FHA as the real villains.

II Religion and Race

To understand the evolution of the Contract Buyers League, one must be aware of the religious configurations—and people—which surrounded it. The initial impression is of a coalition made up of blacks and Catholics fighting Jewish contract sellers. But there have been black and Catholic contract sellers and slumlords in Chicago, just as there have always been black, Catholic, and Jewish

"We fought being dismissed because we wanted a Jewish commitment on the buyers' side."

people who have opposed them. Indeed, the democratic and selfless interaction among the three groups during the life of the League was itself a dramatization of the best moments, and the best moral impulses, of the old civil rights movement.

The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Chicago, John Cardinal Cody, never endorsed or supported the CBL. The fact that the organization was born in a Catholic Church and drew a large measure of support from Catholic lawyers, students, suburbanites, and Jesuits probably resulted from Jack Macnamara's own Catholic background and connections. But beyond that was his personal magnetism. Tall, pensive, seemingly soft-spoken, but sharp-tempered, with frighteningly direct blue eyes, he brought to the League a special genius for organization and a gift for inspiring confidence in people.

Following high school he entered the Jesuit Seminary; after two years of study he dropped out and worked his way through Loyola College as an airport night-clerk; after one year of law school at the University of Chicago he went back to the seminary, and left again to teach high school in Cincinnati. He once said of himself: "When I was in college, I was the kind of person who would say, 'If I can make it, everybody else can too.'" But after deciding to live in Lawndale he received permission to postpone two additional years of seminary study. A quietly intense worker with his own ideas, he nevertheless encouraged the contract buyers to make their own decisions; and he advised all volunteers, lawyers included, to do the same. The black people respected him for this. When his church superiors asked him to leave Lawndale and resume his theological studies, CBL leaders responded with an appeal to the Society of Jesus in Rome, requesting that Macnamara be ordained as a Jesuit without further study so that he could remain in the community. "There was a man sent from God named John," the appeal stated, "to bear witness to the light. Jack is such a man. Some have compared him to Moses, who received his commission directly from God and who went to the Pharaoh, as Jack goes to the centers of power for us today, to say, 'Let my people go.'"

Not only are most of the contract sellers Jewish; many of the Lawndale houses eventually sold on contract were purchased from Jewish families. As it happens, a few years before Macnamara came to Lawndale the Chicago Jewish Council on Urban Affairs had become interested in the contract sales problem. In 1964 it financed a study project, an amalgam of black Baptists, Catholics, and Jews, called the Lawndale Peoples' Planning and Action Council. Under its director, Lew Kreinberg, the

council began researching the estate of a Jewish realtor who left hundreds of contracts after his death. Rabbi Robert J. Marx, former president of the Jewish Council on Urban Affairs, was instrumental in getting the council started; and when the contract sales problem became an issue, he attempted to rally the support of the Jewish community behind the buyers. He attended several CBL meetings, invited contract buyers to speak at his suburban synagogue, raised funds for the buyers, and attempted to pressure the sellers morally into renegotiating their contracts. As chairman of a newly formed Joint-Jewish Committee on Urban Problems, an amalgam of the Anti-Defamation League, the Jewish Federation, and the American Jewish Committee, he condemned the West Side contract sales. Additional support for the buyers came from other members of the Chicago Jewish community, such as Gordon Sherman, then president of the Midas-International Corporation. (Sherman subsequently lost control of Midas to his father in a proxy fight, and now devotes most of his energies to a group called Businessmen for the Public Interest. But while head of Midas he made an initial contribution to CBL of \$5000 of his own money, and pledged the Midas-International Foundation to contribute \$25,000 for a two-year period.) A number of Jewish lawyers, accountants, and workers also volunteered their help.

But beyond the opportunity to give money, service, and moral support to the buyers, Rabbi Marx saw an opportunity to explore the causes of the frictions which, in the past decade, have developed between lower-class black people and Jewish merchants in their communities. The question he was trying to answer was the one posed by Professor Victor Rosenblum of Northwestern Law School, who examined the CBL movement in his Law and Social Change seminar. "Blacks and Jews have in the past been very close on the question of the civil rights movement," Professor Rosenblum observes. "These ties have been rich and deep and real. [But] a good deal of the business relationship, that has not been a good relationship at all, has been a Jewish relationship. . . . Are there explanations which enter the realm of sociology?"

In a speech entitled "The People In Between," prompted by his work on the contract sales issue, Rabbi Marx argues that, historically, the Jewish merchant or landlord in a diaspora community plays a middle role: neither part of the masses nor part of the power structure, in the context of the community he is nevertheless seen by the masses as a marginal and highly visible symbol of the power structure. "The slum landlord, the contract seller, the ghetto

merchant, the Jewish politician in an all-black area," he said, "may be the marginal remainders of what was once a proud Jewish community. Their presence in slum areas is a reality to which we cannot close our eyes. These are the men who play the interstitial role with the most heavy hand. They are in a position where they emerge not as marginal, but as characteristic. It is doubtful whether anyone will ever question how a telephone company exploits poor people by tempting them to spend more money than they should on fancy telephones or long-distance calls. The Jewish ghetto merchant, however, despite his own conceptualization of his role, is almost invariably placed in a position where his business ethics will be questioned because of the prices or interest he charges or because of the temptations he places before his customers."

Despite Rabbi Marx's sympathy for both sides in the conflict, both the sellers and their own supporters within the Jewish community were displeased with his support of the buyers. On occasion some sellers had attempted to raise anti-Semitism as an issue, making charges against both the contract buyers and some of their supporters. When the attitude of most Jewish community leaders remained unchanged, a group of the sellers sued all the CBL leaders, Macnamara, Father Egan, Rabbi Marx, and Gordon Sherman, charging the disruption of their business and claiming \$1 million in damages from each. Then, in a further attempt to rally Jewish solidarity behind them and give the appearance of a Jewish-black issue, the sellers dropped both Rabbi Marx and Gordon Sherman from the suit. "We fought being dismissed," Rabbi Marx explains in his Highland Park home, "because we wanted a Jewish commitment on the buyers' side."

Rabbi Marx talks candidly about his involvement: "We would bring in the contract sellers and try to talk to them about renegotiating their contracts," he recalls. "I remember one seller who came into my office. He said, 'Rabbi, I have to talk with you. I have to do something. I can't live with myself. My conscience can't take any more.' Now that man has renegotiated. The Jewish Council on Urban Affairs has not been in a position to say we've done this, because our whole emphasis has been to put resources into the communities in which we work, and they're black and white."

Rabbi Marx suspects that he has been made to pay for his involvement. In mid-1971 he resigned as president of the Jewish Council on Urban Affairs and was subsequently invited to head the Union of American Hebrew Congregations in New York. According to him, the decision to move was not entirely

his own. "In many ways I'm going to New York because of this issue," he says. "When we fought them [the sellers], some of the people in high places got very angry at me. So that when New York says to me, 'We need you here—we want your talent—and besides we think that there are a couple of key enemies that you have in Chicago that would make it uncomfortable for you to stay there,' that's because of the contract sales issue. That's how involved we were, fighting within the Jewish community. Now, you don't like to be a rabbi fighting Jews. Martin Luther King taught me one thing: If you're a black man, you don't fight other black men; you fight the enemy. I don't like fighting Jews, but I want the Jewish community to see how a couple of guys have been hurting them."

Like Rabbi Marx, Gordon Sherman found that support of the CBL caused many sellers to view him with suspicion. "There were always the insinuations," he recalls, "that mine was a double defection: that as a capitalist I was on the wrong side, and that as a Jew, how could I make anything conspicuous that might be held up in a negative light by non-Jews? The sellers must have seen me as an enemy, but they also saw me as some kind of nut. They'd say, 'He's one of us, and he should be on our side!' People in this society," he says, "are used to being on the *right* side, not because of what we believe but because of where life has put us. When they saw me spoiling for trouble on the *other* side and using my *means*—because the whole game is based on denying some people the means to fight back and so if someone *lends* them the means, it's like shipping arms to Russia—they didn't like it. I didn't have much contact, but the feedback I got implied that I was doing something very wrong and, secretly, that I was some kind of well-meaning nut."

Despite the efforts of some sellers to distort the issues, there was never any visible bias against them as Jews. Jack Macnamara is convinced that the mode of operation of the CBL prevented the emergence of any such conflict. "The black people never made an issue of it," he notes. "But the Real Estate Investors' Association tried to call it an anti-Semitic movement. However, the involvement of Gordon Sherman and Rabbi Marx and the support of the Jewish Council on Urban Affairs and Jewish people in the suburbs showed that the charge was superficial."

Among the black contract buyers one can hear very few references to the ethnic identities of the sellers. Indeed, some buyers praise, in retrospect, the "smart Jew lawyer" who advised them against con-

**"We still marching round in the slave circle
because we don't want to be hurt by society's
slave chain.... Move out a little bit further!
Nip the grass out there because it's pretty!"**

tract buying years before. Very few of the Lawndale people make distinctions between Jewish and other white Americans. This point was made, with some sly humor, by Clyde Ross, the CBL co-chairman, when his deposition was being taken by a lawyer for the sellers. According to Ross, he was asked whether he had ever spoken about the CBL at a synagogue. "I said, 'Hell no!'" Ross relates. "He said, 'Well, I happen to know that you made a speech in Highland Park at a Jewish synagogue.' I said, 'You see, all of y'all look alike to me.' I said, 'I don't know a Jew from a Polish or a Italian or a Irish. I don't know *who* I was speaking to down there. Only thing I know is that all y'all was *white*.' I said, 'You can call it what you want.' He got very angry, because he thought I should know what a Jew was. I don't know nothin' about no Jew. I thought it was a religion. And he's white. So he's a *white* man as far as I'm concerned." Ross pauses a bit before adding: "He got very angry because I put him down with the Polish."

"I think that when you get off on race you lose your point and your goal," Mrs. Ruth Wells says.

But there is an additional religious dimension involved, which may explain why a group of Northern, inner-city black people were able to maintain an organization as complex as the CBL for over four years. The Lawndale people are primarily Baptist. Most are middle-aged, and most are migrants from Alabama, Arkansas, and Mississippi. The structure of their Wednesday night meetings resembles that of a Baptist church service. In a sense, the CBL people have abstracted the form of Sunday morning storefront church meetings and reassembled it around an economic issue, in much the same way that Martin Luther King managed to reassemble the religious convictions of Southern black church people around political and economic issues during the early sixties.

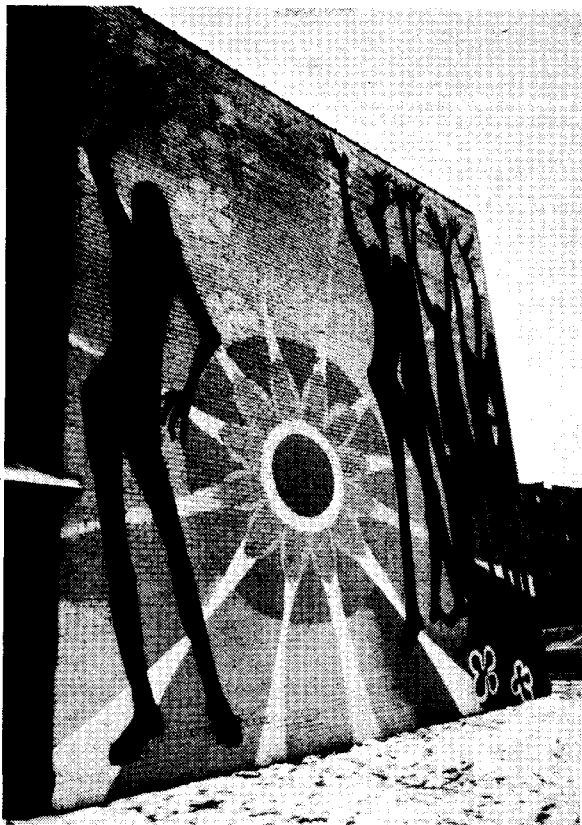
Every Wednesday night during the first three years of the CBL, Mrs. Luceal Johnson and other Lawndale women would cook a communion dinner in Jack Macnamara's apartment. The atmosphere would be relaxed and gossipy, with contract buyers and white lawyers sitting down to plates of fried chicken. Then they would walk the few blocks to Martin Luther King Hall, in the basement of Presentation Church, for the meeting.

A long prayer, in the rhythmic, singsong idiom of a fundamentalist black minister, usually precedes each meeting. All prayers are spontaneous, asking God for guidance, offering thanks for the progress of the League, and usually including references to the sell-

ers, judges, and recent incidents involving the League. The people sit silently with heads bowed during the prayers, but afterwards a hymn or spiritual might be sung by the entire audience. Then a progress report is given by either Charles Baker, the CBL chairman, or Clyde Ross, the co-chairman. Ross's deliveries, more free-wheeling than Baker's, usually weave in reports of CBL progress and failures with inspirational asides and references to the Old Testament. Besides a mastery of the evangelical idiom, Ross is able to evoke the mood of a black church sermon: the call and response, the repetition of certain patterns of words known by each member of the audience since childhood church services, the question-and-answer dialogue between minister and audience, the building of his speeches to an emotional epiphany which provides a cathartic sense of union between speaker and audience. He has talked of Moses delivering the people across the Red Sea, of Ezekiel looking down into the Valley of Dry Bones (both references are to Macnamara), and of Pharaoh's Army (the sheriff's deputies and security guards who eventually evicted a number of people from their homes). Easygoing, introspective, and more than a little concerned over his lack of formal education, Ross nonetheless undergoes an almost complete change of personality when addressing the CBL members.

At one point, Ross offered the following speech at a Wednesday night meeting:

Let me tell you a story that I experienced when I was quite young. One of my chores around the family home in the South was to graze the cow. We had no pasture, so we had to graze the cow wherever we could find grassy areas. So we would put a chain around the cow's foot, and we would lock it down real tight, and then we would drive an iron peg down and fasten the other end of the chain onto this peg. The cow would go around in this circle and nibble all the grass she could nibble in this circle until there was no more. But one day I came back to water her and the chain was *off*, and she could have got away. But she was still going round in this circle because she was afraid of the pinch of the chain. That's the way some of us are right today. We can get out! *We can get out now!* But we *still* marching round in the *slave circle* because we don't want to be hurt by society's slave chain. We still feel it. We still feel it on our legs. *We're loose! We are loose! Move out! Move out a little bit further! Nip the grass out there because it's pretty! Just move!* The chain is gone. It's only *you* that think it's there. *Move out!* And stop these men from *robbing* you! And stop these men from *persecuting* you! *Move out!* And get some of this land that was *yours* from the start! The chain is off.



*Above, a West Side mural.
Right, CBL co-chairman Clyde Ross.
Below, buyer Mrs. Luceal Johnson.*



After a short speech by Baker, Macnamara, Mrs. Wells, or one of the lawyers, the people are expected to stand up and talk about their own experiences with contract buying, the situation of their own cases in the courts, or any contact with "their" seller. Even the white lawyers and workers are expected to do this. The testimonies are much like "witnessing," a process through which individuals share with other congregants the story of their journey from "sin" to salvation. But in the case of the CBL people, contract buying has been identified with sin, renegotiation with salvation, and the League itself as God's instrument of salvation. The shameless identification of oneself as a victim or "sucker," which was virtually impossible before the CBL started, is now a common occurrence. For example, one nervous, middle-aged black woman who was not even a League member was moved to make the following statement after sitting through one of the meetings:

Good evening ladies and gentlemen. The best thing you can do is git you a lawyer who'll mean you some good and not the other man some good. We bought some property. The lot was \$650. The seller put us up a house and on the bill of sale it said "a complete house." We carried it to our lawyer and he said, "Well, he says a complete house." He didn't give us no gutters, no yard, or nothing. We went back over there and I said, "There ain't no gutters, the water's just running on down into our house." He comes back out, puts the gutters in and levels the yard and charges us \$6000 for that. I went back to the lawyer and he say, "He can charge you what he want for his work. He *did* give you a complete house." That's why I say git you a lawyer that's go'n do *you* some good and not the other fellow. So he can read all that fine writing that you not educated to read. And then you can git somewhere. Don't, they gonna beat you regardless of what you go by. Then he come tellin' me to sign a *quick deed* [quitclaim deed] after all that money we done paid.

On the other hand, some of the people whose contracts were favorably renegotiated after the lawsuits were filed returned to the meetings to state their respect for the instrument of their salvation.

Some part of this pattern reoccurs in all the meetings: a fragment of a larger ritual as old as the Black American Church. Participation in it involves a special kind of discipline, requiring a willed perspective on good and bad, maintained not because of an unawareness of political realities or even because of fear of retaliation, but because of a fierce determination to preserve one's own humanity and one's own belief in the ultimate perfectibility of man through the sometimes mysterious ways of God. The buyers, in their unity, do not see the sellers in racial terms.

What they do see is that the sellers, as an outside force, have inadvertently provided them with an opportunity to assert their sense of community and of morality. In such a context, the positive force of black unity is more important than racial or religious bitterness.

But far beyond the specific economic and social issues, the CBL raises the question of the relationship between the rituals of the Black Church and black grass-roots political activity. How can one account for the appeal, among millions of black Americans, of the evangelical idiom used by Martin Luther King, or the modified and modernized use of that same idiom currently being used by Jesse Jackson? Or the apocalyptic impulses behind so much of militant black protest during the sixties? While some critics say that King paid too little attention to the possibilities of moral outcry as a means of achieving political goals far removed from Christian idealism, others note that many of those committed to achieving strictly political goals, unlike King, pay too little attention to moral outcry as an effective technique for reaching grass-roots black people. The difficulty arises from a failure to recognize one of the most powerful legacies of black slaves to their generations.

On one level this legacy is essentially moral. It involves a system of beliefs concerning the conception of God and His power as demonstrated in the myths of the Old Testament. Black slaves incorporated these Jewish folk dramas into their definitions of themselves centuries ago. As part of the group psyche they were passed along, mainly within the churches, from one generation to the next. Some historians and social critics have dismissed this intense identification with Old Testament personalities and myths as no more than an escape mechanism with which slaves protected themselves from having to face the brutal realities of their lives. But it was more than this. Slaves took on a sense of morality which allowed, or almost required, them to make judgments about the people and institutions which held them captive. A sense of optimism came with the religion which helped them to survive and which still functions, in a secular context, in spirituals and jazz and blues. The identification provided an almost omnipotent perspective, which made biblical codes the ultimate moral standards, and a sense of history and reality that was sometimes sharper than that of whites.

This is part of what was passed along within the churches. And the minister's responsibility,

"Most of our people are church people and nonviolent. But I'll tell you something: there's nobody in the world more violent than these people if you make them mad. And I'll tell you something else: there's nobody in the world who wants peace more than these people."



Charles Baker

especially in the more fundamentalist churches, was not so much to be a moral example for his people as it was to reinforce this perspective every Sunday morning by spinning out, and relating to their present situation, one of the moral dramas from the pages of the Old Testament: good versus evil, right versus wrong, God's will versus man's. The result of this has been the creation of a broad level of black society that retains abstract moral codes which are sometimes in conflict with certain capitalistic freedoms and political restrictions allowed by American society. Traditional American standards of morality have never been adequate to define the values of black people who are on this level. But they are the ones who followed King the Christian, who called him Moses, and who now keep pictures of him on their mantels. They will walk out of their churches for any politician or leader—Nat Turner, Adam Clayton Powell, Martin Luther King, Jesse Jackson—who knows their style and who can converse with them in their idiom. Under the care of the right leader the appeal becomes political.

Charles Baker, the CBL chairman, takes all this for granted without really understanding the causes. "Most of our people are church people and nonviolent," he says. "They studied to be religious. You have to push them into a fight. Ninety-eight percent of them were born in the South. But I'll tell you something: there's nobody in the world more violent than these people if you make them mad. And I'll tell you something else: there's nobody in the world who wants peace more than these people, and they'd bend over backwards to get it. This kind of fellow's been taught all his life, 'Thou shalt not kill.' And he'd just hate to do something like that. But it hurts him when somebody misuses him."

A person who symbolizes both the grievances and the convictions of most West Side CBL members is Mrs. Luceal Johnson. A stout, handsome woman in her late fifties, she migrated to Chicago from Natchez, Mississippi, in 1940. When she and her husband bought their home on contract, they were led to believe that they would be allowed a mortgage after 50 percent of the principal had been paid. In point of fact, they did receive a mortgage; the seller simply allowed them to assume his own mortgage obligation and reduced their monthly contract payments. But when they attempted to borrow money on it to get their back porch repaired, the same lawyer who had advised them that they were getting a "good deal" on the contract sale informed them that the mortgage was worthless. He did, how-

ever, arrange another "deal" for them. Under its terms, they received a loan of \$1300 to pay off certain bills, and the lawyer "arranged" for a contractor to repair and enclose the porch. In return, the Johnsons will have to pay \$6000 for the loan and repairs. Mrs. Johnson has been a domestic for over thirty years.

"I makes my living scrubbing floors," she declares. "And I ain't ashamed to tell it because I makes it *honestly*. I makes an honest dollar. I'm still doing it, and it feel *good*! That's all I ever know to do. My parents weren't able to give me an education, but they did teach me to work. And they taught me all about being honest. And I work for real rich peoples that have been more than nice to me. They know all about the unjust things that go on in America, and they're in the fight too. Because they see America falling, and they're going to suffer too."

To Mrs. Johnson, the racial and economic implications of her involvement have been negated by larger religious and spiritual considerations. "I wasn't such a fool," she says; "that when I bought the house I didn't have a mouthpiece with me. But the bad part of the thing is that we just don't have what we need in our lives to go out and do something, white or black: we just don't have *love*. And this is the key point to everything. CBL just made a *step* in correcting it. We stepped out on God's word. We couldn't have man to depend on because man had let us down. We stepped out on *faith* that we *could* do something about this thing when God heard our cry. Because every time we get ready to spend a dollar we got to go by a man with no justice in his heart. We wouldn't have these problems if we recognized just a little of God's word. But now, we just like the Children of Israel: both sides, black and white. We're just the spit [spitting image] of them. And God will punish you when you walk away from Him too far. And we can't make the journey without Him. I don't care *who* says we can. And I don't care who you are or where you come from; you just as well stay in your pants, because God ain't go'n let you go too far. And this is the onliest thing I got to rely on; I don't put my trust in *no man no more*! Education is fine: all of these peoples that we're buying our houses from, they're overequipped with education. But there ain't no God-life in them, because if they *had* it they wouldn't be doing the things that they are doing. We're just lacking love in our hearts for one another. And the onliest way we'll win is we've got to have faith that we're fighting for the right thing. And then we can't pack no hate along with us in this fight. Can't get *mad* with the man. Just feel *sorry* for him!"

How did the CBL get started?

"God kept sending peoples to warn, just like He's doing today. He sent Amos, Hosea, He sent other men to warn the Children of Israel of their wrongdoings. Just like today every once in a while somebody springs up from somewhere. I had never heard of a Martin Luther King, but all of a sudden he jumped up out of the middle of nowhere and started telling America about the wrongdoing. And what did they do? They killed him because they didn't want to hear the truth. But you can't kill the truth. *You cannot kill the word of God!* So I think that prayer accounted for the organization of the League. Going on my job each day, I pray, 'Lord, keep me and help me to come up from under these burdens.'"

How do you know God caused the CBL to get started?

"You ask me if I believe God had something to do with CBL getting started? *Who else* had anything to do with it?! You can *rest assured* that *man* didn't! What happened in CBL happened *through* man! So I feel, and I'm sure that I'm right, that God heard our cry. You've got to give God the credit for these peoples who've come in here and put their lives on the line to work in this. This ain't no two- or three-dollar deal we messing with here. This is *millions* of dollars! And peoples will kill you about money; that's *all* they'll kill you about, *money!* So God heard our cry in Lawndale. Jack Macnamara come in and laid his life on the line, warned the peoples and told the peoples in figures and facts that they're being cheated. Then God blessed him with a whole lot of more peoples to come in and surround him to help in the fight. See, God will bail you out. He's bailing *us* out. But this ain't no situation to get hung up on color; getting hung up on some of *God's love* will bail us out."

What part of the Bible would you say is closest to what has happened in the CBL?

"I think of 'Love one another,' and the Commandments. If we love the Lord our God with all our hearts and all our souls and minds, and love our neighbors as ourselves, we done covered them Commandments. And 'Let not your heart be troubled; he that believes in God believes also in me.' And I think of 'In my Father's House there are many mansions,' and *I'm going to get me some of them too!* If I didn't believe these passages of the Scriptures, I would get right out there and raise hell with the rest of the peoples. But I'm not mad and angry. God blessed me with health to keep on working. . . . And if the laws and the judges and the peoples in the high places can't find no justice for me, I'm getting mine through Christ Jesus. I don't worry about it anymore. If I don't get *nothing* back, if I can just pay for the house

and get a clear title, I'll be just as happy as if they come and give me a lot of money. 'Cause I'm gonna spend it anyway."

Some CBL people mythmake as they go along: thus, Jack Macnamara as Moses, or Ezekiel. He smiles with what may be embarrassment when questioned about his reactions to these biblical references. Some suspect that he subtly encouraged the people to view the conflict in a moral perspective. Macnamara denies this. "My own thinking," he says, "is that a truly religious act is usually also a political act, and a social act, and maybe even a legal act. I've always felt that there is a religious element in what's going on here which was really taught to me by the people themselves, while at the same time there are some things from my religious background which I have imparted to them. . . ."

"The other side of it," he continues, "is that the churches have really duped black people through the years. They teach a religious faith that Jesus will fix things if you wait long enough. I remember going to a black church a while back, and the thing that stands out most in my mind is the hymn they sang in the middle of the service: 'Jesus Will Fix It, After A While.' This really did violence to me personally because it seems to me the truly believing person believes that God will work but also that we have to do our part in it. Faith is really faith in ourselves and God being able to accomplish something together rather than simply faith that God will take care of everything if you wait long enough. But two things have impressed me. One is the attitude of the people toward the sellers. It's not one of bitterness and hatred. The other is—particularly at the beginning; it's not as strong now—there were people who turned down fantastic settlements, \$10,000 and \$12,000 settlements, until the seller would agree to renegotiate everybody's contract on the same basis. When I see that happening, then I see God, really alive, and can believe."

III The Law

Once CBL members began demanding renegotiation of contracts, most of the sellers joined together and organized the Real Estate Investors' Association. They hired lawyers, and each seller put approximately \$5000 into a fund in preparation for possible legal action.

But the CBL was also reorganizing.

"The other side of it is that the churches have really duped black people. They teach a religious faith that Jesus will fix things if you wait long enough. A hymn they sing is 'Jesus Will Fix It, After a While.'"



Jack Macnamara

From the South Side of Chicago, in late 1968, came hundreds of young middle-class black people who had purchased newly constructed single-family homes from ten small companies doing joint-venture business under the collective name Universal Builders. Between 1960 and 1968, Universal had built and the ten companies had sold more than 1000 homes to black families, mostly on contract, and salesmen for the ten companies are said to have insisted, even to a family with a \$10,000 down payment; that contract terms were better than those allowed by a conventional mortgage. The South Side buyers had heard about the West Side CBL through the news media and through the oral communications network which links all black communities. The South Siders saw themselves at a similar economic disadvantage, despite their relatively higher incomes, better educations, and newer homes. And indeed, the financial practices of the companies were similar to those on the West Side.

The CBL expanded to accommodate the newcomers from the South Side. The word "Lawndale," which had been in its original title, was dropped, and it became simply the Contract Buyers League. Toward the end of 1968 it moved from Macnamara's apartment into an office on South Pulaski Road, the West Side's main avenue. The white workers and supporters formed the Gamaliel Foundation, a nonprofit "advisory" offspring of the Presentation Church Project, which solicited and contributed money for the support of the CBL. To ensure that the black contract buyers would maintain full control of the organization, four of them were hired to run the new office: Mrs. Ruth Wells, who had been actively involved all along; Mrs. Henrietta Banks, a sharp, gregarious middle-aged contract buyer; Charles Baker, an even-tempered buyer who was granted leave from the Campbell Soup Company's Chicago factory so that he could become a full-time worker as CBL chairman; and co-chairman Clyde Ross, a brooding man who was also granted leave by the Campbell Soup Company. But both organizations, the black buyers and their white allies, used the same office.

Money came from many sources. Besides the contributions from Gordon Sherman, Jesuits across the country, Catholic students, private citizens, and small foundations gave financial support.

But the most important contribution to the CBL resulted from the interest of Harold W. Sullivan, presiding judge of the Circuit Court of Cook County. Irish Catholic like Macnamara, and also a native of Skokie, Judge Sullivan responded immediately to Macnamara's request for lawyers. He organized a Lawyers Committee, and persuaded forty to fifty

Chicago lawyers to attend a dinner meeting at which Macnamara and several contract buyers explained the situation. As honorary chairman, Judge Sullivan advised the lawyers that "the legal profession has an outstanding opportunity to demonstrate its social conscience simply by aiding in the renegotiation of these contracts."

The most extensive commitment of free lawyer services came from Albert E. Jenner, senior partner of Jenner & Block, a leading law firm in Chicago. Although called politically conservative, Jenner & Block had a few years before permitted some of its younger lawyers to take on gratis criminal defense work, and had been considering the possibility of opening a free legal services office in a black area of the city. Albert Jenner has served as Chief Counsel for the Warren Commission and as a member of the President's Commission on Civil Disorders. Among the lawyers from Jenner & Block who volunteered were Thomas P. Sullivan, a hard-driving middle-aged trial lawyer with an excellent reputation, John G. Stifler, John C. Tucker, Richard T. Franch, and David Roston, all young and aggressive junior members of the firm.

Another volunteer was Thomas Boodell, Jr., a young, soft-spoken Harvard Law School graduate. After four years of work in his father's small but prestigious firm, Boodell, Sears, Sugrue & Crowley, Tom Boodell decided to go on his own for a while. He tried his hand at magazine editing, spent some time camping out and thinking, and then heard about the contract sales effort. As a child in the suburbs, he had heard his father condemning contract selling at the dinner table. During the summer of 1968 he walked into Lawndale, attended the Wednesday night dinners and meetings, and got acquainted with the people. In the fall, he wrote a proposal to the Adlai Stevenson Institute of International Affairs at the University of Chicago, asking that he be accepted as a Stevenson Fellow and allowed to begin research on contract selling. Boodell was accepted that same fall and received fellowships from both the Institute and the American Bar Foundation. "I had no idea of where I was heading at that time," Tom Boodell admits three years later. "One thing I observed when I first went out to Lawndale was that they didn't trust lawyers. But from the facts they showed me I felt there had to be some aspect of the problem that could be framed legally and taken into a courtroom setting, if they wanted that. So I just started thinking about it. I went to some of the meetings and sort of plodded along."

The Supreme Court said in 1968 that abolition of "badges of slavery" required that a dollar in the hands of a black man must have the same economic power as a dollar in the hands of a white man.

The CBL people, however, did not intend to plod along. In late November of 1968, after ten months of picketing, the sellers had not agreed to more than seven renegotiations. Charles Baker announced a payment-withholding strike. Since most of the sellers had to meet their own monthly mortgage, tax, and insurance payments on the buildings with part of the contract money they collected, the CBL's payment strike was calculated to apply economic pressures. Each month the League would collect money orders for the monthly payments, which each buyer would make out to himself, and put them in escrow. Those West Side buyers who had rented out flats in their buildings promised their tenants a 25 percent reduction in rents after renegotiation if they agreed not to pay them to the sellers. Charles Baker, speaking for most members of the strike, vowed that if the sellers repossessed the buildings, the CBL would discourage other black families from buying them. "The speculators need not fear that the buildings will burn down," he said. "We don't want them to collect money on the insurance we have paid over the years."

The strike lasted five months, despite threats of mass evictions. By the middle of January, 1969, 60 families had been sued for possession under the sellers' old protection, the eviction law. But more and more people joined the strike. By late March, 595 families had joined, withholding over \$250,000. At each Wednesday night meeting Charles Baker would announce the total amount withheld, and the people would cheer. "If you see a lot of these sellers leaving town," Baker said at one point while reading off the total, "this is why!"

Like the creation of the CBL, *Clark v. Universal Builders* and *Baker v. F & F Investment* result from the collision of two previously unconnected events: the payment-withholding strike by black contract buyers in December, 1968, and the U.S. Supreme Court's *Jones v. Mayer* ruling in June, 1968, which resurrected a section of the 1866 Civil Rights Act (p. 69), and said abolition of "badges of slavery" required that a dollar in the hands of a black man must have the same economic power as a dollar in the hands of a white man. Tom Sullivan, the Jenner & Block trial lawyer, and Robert Ming, a black lawyer who is a veteran of civil rights litigation, were the men who tied the Supreme Court's *Jones v. Mayer* ruling to the CBL's lawsuits. A slim, reserved Irish Catholic, Sullivan takes care to explain exactly how he came to file the suits. "Judge Harold Sullivan called and said there was a big emergency with possible evictions coming up," Sullivan (no relation to the judge) recalls. "I told him to have the CBL people come into

my office. In late November they came in. I met Jack Macnamara and some of the others for the first time. They explained the problem, and said the lawyers had told them there was nothing that could be done. I said, 'Well, I don't agree with that. I would be surprised if there were nothing that could be done.' At that time the *Jones v. Mayer* case had just come down and everyone was very much aware of the old 1866 Civil Rights Act. So I said I would look into it, with the idea of eventually filing some lawsuits. Shortly after that I got in touch with Bob Ming and asked if he would join me in the case. He said he would. So during December, Bob Ming, John Stifler, Tom Boodell, and I evolved what is now the basic lawsuit. And on January 6, 1969, we filed the West Side suit [*Baker*]; and a couple of weeks after, we filed the South Side suit [*Clark*]."

Both suits were filed in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. The West Side suit joined three classes of defendants: contract sellers, lending institutions which granted them mortgages, and the assignees of both the sellers and the lenders. Besides conspiracy and the alleged violations of civil rights, the defendants were charged with blockbusting, violations of federal antitrust and securities laws, unconscionability, usury, and fraud.

In the South Side suit, the ten companies and Universal Builders were charged with conspiracy, civil rights and federal securities violations, unconscionability, usury, and fraud. In both cases the statement of facts was essentially the same, as was the charge that both classes of sellers had exploited customs and usage of residential segregation and the artificial scarcity of housing for their own financial benefit.

Lawyers for both sets of sellers immediately filed motions that the cases be dismissed, charging that no claim upon which relief could be granted had been stated by the complaints. CBL lawyers filed memoranda in opposition to the motions. And in late March the Justice Department intervened, filing a small "friend-of-the-court" brief in support of the civil rights count of the West Side complaint.

For some time before its intervention in March, the Justice Department had been petitioned to enter the case. According to Jack Macnamara, Chicago supporters of the CBL had made several attempts to convince outgoing Attorney General Ramsey Clark to bring the weight of the Justice Department behind the buyers. Thomas Foran, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, for example, had supported the CBL from its beginning. Foran encouraged Thomas Todd, a young black Assistant U.S. Attorney, to get involved on the side of the buy-

ers. Another government supporter was John McKnight, former director of the Midwestern Office of the Civil Rights Commission.

Foran and Todd had sent a copy of the two com-

plaints to Ramsey Clark during the last days of the Johnson Administration, trying to get a commitment. But even telegrams and petitions from sympathetic congressmen were ineffective. Finally, in January,

THE LAW AND THE COURTS—A Chronology

■ **1827**—The Illinois Forcible Entry and Detainer Act—the state’s eviction law—was passed as a speedy remedy for landlords against trespassing tenants, but amended in 1861 to include contract buying. Delinquent buyers could be sued for possession after being served with a thirty-day warning notice of demand for payment and intent to start forcible proceedings, with the further warning that the contract would be terminated and tax payments forfeited. Procedures in circuit court have been concerned with “issue of possession”; defendants’ response has been limited to whether notice was received and whether money was owed. To appeal an eviction judgment and raise defenses, defendant must post, within five days of judgment, a full amount appeal bond covering all delinquencies and all payments to become due during time of the appeal (usually one to one and a half years). Most contracts required buyers to pay sellers’ fees and costs in the event of these proceedings.

■ **1866**—United States Congress passes the nation’s first Civil Rights Act under authority of section II of the Thirteenth Amendment. Section I of the 1866 Act, now codified as 42 United States Code, section 1982, states that:

All citizens of the United States shall have the same right, in every State and Territory, as is enjoyed by white citizens thereof to inherit, purchase, lease, sell, hold, and convey real and personal property.

In arguing that Congress had power under the Thirteenth Amendment to pass such a law, Illinois Senator Lyman Trumbull, sponsor of the Civil Rights Act, noted: “I have no doubt that under this provision . . . we may destroy all these discriminations in civil rights against the black man;

and if we cannot, our constitutional amendment amounts to nothing.”

From 1866 until 1968, section 1982 was interpreted to prevent states, and not the private actions of individuals, from violating the civil rights of blacks.

■ **1948**—United States Supreme Court, in *Shelley v. Kraemer* and companion cases, held that judicial enforcement of racially restrictive covenants violated the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Section 1982, considered in a companion case, was still noted to be applicable only against state action.

■ **1968**—United States Supreme Court, in *Jones v. Alfred H. Mayer Co.*, dropped the legal and technical requirements and simply applied the constitutionality of section 1982 to bar *all* racial discrimination, private as well as public, in the sale or rental of property. The statute was construed as a valid exercise of the power of Congress to enforce the Thirteenth Amendment. Justice Potter Stewart: “At the very least, the freedom that Congress is empowered to secure under the Thirteenth Amendment includes the freedom to buy whatever a white man can buy, the right to live wherever a white man can live. If Congress cannot say that being a free man means at least this much, then the Thirteenth Amendment made a promise the nation cannot keep.”

■ **1969**—Hubert L. Will, Federal District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois, denying a motion to dismiss two class actions brought by the Contract Buyers League against private parties, held that a cause of action had been stated under section 1982, as the 1866 Civil Rights Act was interpreted in *Jones v. Mayer*.

**"Now, the Justice Department is very quiet;
everybody there is either sleeping or dead."**

1969, during the very first days of the Nixon Administration, Jerris Leonard, Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division, agreed to see Macnamara, Todd, and McKnight. They immediately flew to Washington. "One of the points I kept stressing to Leonard," Macnamara recalls, "was that kids in the neighborhood believed that going through the law wouldn't work, and the only thing that would work would be bombing the real estate people; and that it seemed important for an Administration concerned about violence to do its part in helping to prove to the people that justice can be obtained by going through the courts. At the end of the conference Mr. Leonard said to me, 'If we do come into this case you have a grave obligation to let the people know that we did come in.' I said, 'I have a grave obligation to let the people know if you do decide to come in or if you decide not to come in.' Mr. Leonard threw up his hands and said, 'All right. You've got me!'"

The Justice Department, as a federal agency, was caught between the pressures on it to intervene and the probability that CBL lawyers would eventually join, as co-defendants in the lawsuits, the Federal Housing Administration, the Veterans Administration, and the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation. To prevent immediate embarrassment, a deal was made between the Department and CBL lawyers: if CBL would refrain for the time being from making the three federal agencies co-defendants, the government would intervene on behalf of the buyers. Thomas Todd wrote an initial forty-three-page draft of a government brief, of which ten pages were "really scathing about the FHA." But just before arguments on the motion to dismiss were to be heard and Todd was preparing to fly to Washington to get Justice Department approval of the brief, he received a call from Jerris Leonard. According to Todd, Leonard indicated that while the Justice Department was not opposed to the CBL issues, there was no money for the trip. "I asked whether he would see me if I came," Todd recalls. "And he said yes."

Thomas Foran contributed \$50, Todd paid \$50, and \$50 more came from other sources. Thomas Todd flew to Washington. "Were they surprised to see me!" Thomas Todd says. "I stormed around and demanded that they see me. At last one of Leonard's assistants came out and said that he would look at the brief. I have no doubt that he was a brilliant young law graduate, but in two hours he had cut my forty-three-page brief down to seven and there was

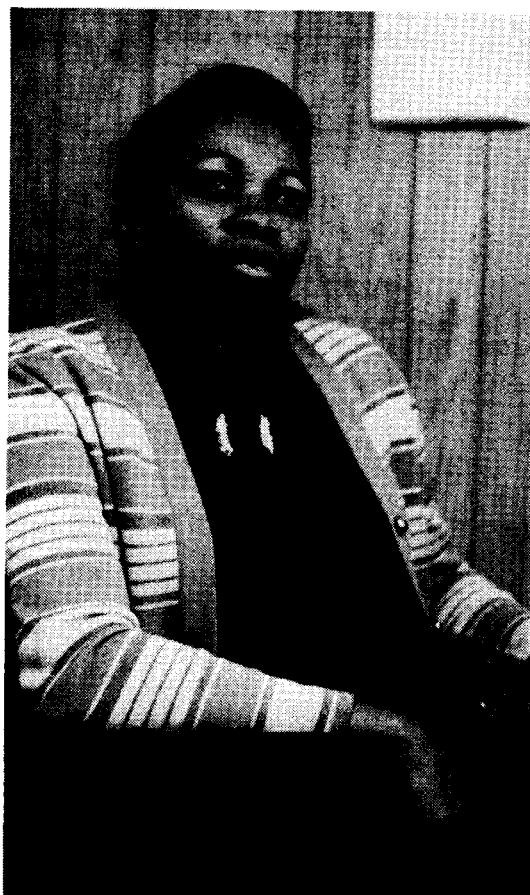
nothing left of it. The ten pages I had on the FHA had been dismissed in a sentence. I am a gentle person, normally, but I called him everything I could think of and accused him of having a robot mind and a computerized attitude. Now, the Justice Department in Washington is very quiet; everybody there is either sleeping or dead. But in the middle of it all I cursed him in the best street language. He said that we would rework it then. And we did. All night. The result was an eleven-page brief which said almost nothing. This was Leonard's doing. I flew back to Chicago on Thursday night. We had already sent out notices that we would be looking to intervene on Friday morning. Well, despite the reluctance of the Justice Department to get in, they had the press releases ready in Washington. And although we were not before the judge until 10:30 A.M., they had releases out saying we had been in at 9:30 A.M. They said this was an indication of what the Administration was going to do to help black people. But the brief said absolutely nothing. It got them a million dollars' worth of publicity."

The Justice Department's press release contained Attorney General John Mitchell's statement that the brief was "the federal government's first effort to break massive Northern housing segregation under the Supreme Court's ruling in *Jones v. Mayer*." Jerris Leonard noted at a Washington press conference that this was the first time the federal government had entered a housing suit, brought by private parties, at the district court level; and that it was also the first attack by the Justice Department on sales terms which are more onerous to blacks than to whites. He called the overcharges a "race tax," and indicated that the federal government was considering attacks on similar speculation in other cities, Detroit among them. "Anyone who rakes off a profit based on racial discrimination should have to pay it back with interest," he told the press.

In late May, after an initial ruling that the cases could be filed as class actions,* Judge Hubert L. Will of the federal district court delivered his opinion on the sellers' motion to dismiss. A brilliant, forceful judge, he had been under tremendous pressures from both sides since being assigned to the cases. Besides the publicity, the strike, the inter-

*A class action is a suit in which representatives of a specific group of people file a lawsuit, on behalf of all those similarly situated, but too numerous to bring before a court, in which common questions of law and fact predominate over individual questions. The resolution of the lawsuit settles the interest of all parties similarly situated.

FAMILIES RENEGOTIATED BY C. B. L.			
NAME	ADDRESS	OLD-NEW BAL.	SAVINGS
CLIFTON TURNER	1512 S. KENNEDY	6,800 - 3,000	\$3,800
GEORGE CHRISTIAN	2428 W. POLK		
ACHIE WEST	4001 W. WASHINGTON	11,000 - 8,000	\$3,000
HENRIETTA BANKS	2701 W. FLEMING	12,000 - 8,000	\$4,000
WILLIE BUCKNER	2518 W. VAN BUREN	11,000 - 8,000	\$3,000
WILLIAM JAMES	618 S. KESLER	11,000 - 8,000	\$3,000
PHILLIPS, THOMAS	1201 S. TAPP	17,000 - 10,000	\$7,000
LAWRENCE OWENS	2312 W. WASHINGTON	17,000 - 10,000	\$7,000
LAWRENCE PATTEN	3244 W. POLK	12,000 - 8,000	\$4,000
ROSEMARY PROFFER	402 S. DRAKE	7,000 - 5,000	\$2,000
LEWIS SMITH	4334 W. JACKSON	12,000 - 8,000	\$4,000
LEWIS JAY	3207 W. FLEMING	12,000 - 8,000	\$4,000
CLARENCE STANLEY	2474 W. POLK	21,000 - 16,000	\$5,000
ARLENE WATMAN	3272 W. ADAMS	17,000 - 12,000	\$5,000
CLAY BARRETT	2424 W. FLEMING	11,000 - 8,000	\$3,000
JOHN LILLIE COLLINS	2471 W. FLEMING	11,000 - 8,000	\$3,000
LEONARD DANIELS	4428 W. CONGRESS	11,000 - 8,000	\$3,000
JOHN DAVIS	2127 W. WASHINGTON	11,000 - 8,000	\$3,000
JOSIE MATTIE SMITH	2932 W. POLK	11,000 - 8,000	\$3,000
W. THORNTON FIELDS	3230 W. POLK	11,000 - 8,000	\$3,000
W. ROBERT GORD	2424 W. FLEMING	11,000 - 8,000	\$3,000
W. WILLY GREEN	3121 W. POLK	11,000 - 8,000	\$3,000
W. LUCAS WHITE	2424 W. WILCOX	11,000 - 8,000	\$3,000
W. MARYA SOKERTILLE	4110 W. VAN BUREN	11,000 - 8,000	\$3,000
W. CHARLES PERKINS	2424 S. LEONIS	11,000 - 8,000	\$3,000
W. LORETTA FLEMING	2424 S. SPRINGFIELD	11,000 - 8,000	\$3,000



Above, sign in CBL's Pulaski Road office window.
Left, CBL worker Mrs. Henrietta Banks.
Below, a South Side neighborhood.



"...there cannot in this country be markets or profits based on the color of a man's skin."

vention of the Justice Department, heated outbursts in his court, and charges by West Side sellers that he was anti-Semitic, he was also to be criticized by local groups, including the Urban League, for proceeding with the cases too slowly. On the most crucial issue, the applicability of the 1866 Civil Rights Act as interpreted in *Jones v. Mayer*, he ruled that the buyers had stated a case:

What was true in *Jones* is true here also—the defendants call "revolutionary" what is simply a denial of their assumption that there is a necessary sanctity in the *status quo*. Defendants present the discredited claim that it is necessarily right for businessmen to secure profits wherever profit is available, arguing specifically with respect to this case that they did not create the system of *de facto* segregation which was the condition for the alleged discriminatory profit. But the law in the United States has grown to define certain economic bonds and ethical limits of business enterprise. . . . So we are hearing an old and obsolete lament. For it is now understood that under section 1982 [of the 1866 Civil Rights Act] as interpreted in *Jones v. Alfred H. Mayer Co.*, there cannot in this country be markets or profits based on the color of a man's skin.

In ruling that a civil rights claim had been stated and in answer to the defendants' contention that the claim alleged "hypothetical" discrimination, Judge Will noted that "defendants' position elaborated is that if property is sold to a negro above what can be demonstrated to be the usual market price, there is no discrimination unless the same seller actually sells to whites at a lower price. It should be clear that in law the result would be obnoxious. In logic, it is ridiculous. It would mean that the 1866 Civil Rights Act, which was created to be an instrument for the abolition of discrimination, allows an injustice so long as it is visited entirely on negroes."

He dismissed the charged violations of securities laws, as well as charges of unconscionability, fraud, and usury. But he refused to dismiss the savings and loan associations as defendant-lenders.

Over a year after Judge Will's opinion, Sullivan and Ming amended their complaint to join as defendants the Federal Housing Administration, the Veterans Administration, and the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation. Both the FHA and the VA were charged with complicity and discriminatory practices in the backing of mortgages. The FSLIC was charged with taking over a number of savings and loan associations, which had folded because of alleged backing of speculators, and holding over 800 mortgages on properties sold to black people on contracts which were still being administered at the same inflated prices. This time the federal government

filed a motion claiming immunity and asking to be dismissed. So far, this level of the litigation has not been resolved.

That is how the two CBL lawsuits, *Baker v. F. & F. Investment* and *Clark v. Universal Builders*, got into federal court.

The buyers' payment-withholding strike had been ended by two agreements following the filing of *Baker v. F. & F. Investment* and *Clark v. Universal Builders*. The South Side agreement, made on March 4, 1969, required South Side buyers to continue making payments "without prejudice" directly to Universal Builders. The West Side agreement, made on April 3, 1969, required all striking buyers to continue making payments and required all sellers to deposit a portion of the monthly payments in escrow each month pending outcome of *Baker*. Because they were negotiated by lawyers and entered as court orders, the agreements bound a young, highly energetic black grass-roots movement and a small group of mostly white, relatively moderate lawyers to the same goal. The marriage was sometimes a strained one; the priorities were different. Few buyers wanted to continue making direct payments to the sellers, and favored mass confrontation tactics and economic pressure to achieve renegotiation. The lawyers confined their efforts to the legal arena, to winning the two cases. The differences in approach created tension, discord, sometimes mistrust. But there were even more fundamental problems.

One was the relationship between the black and white CBL workers and the young people of the West Side, which had been tense all along. Lawndale, with its resident street gangs, has one of the highest crime rates in Chicago. The gang members did not actively support the organization; some of them harassed white CBL workers, but they did not try to impede the CBL's progress. Charles Baker believes that CBL's presence has been responsible for a decrease in Lawndale gang activity. He attributes this to the fact that CBL is "working with the parents of the so-called gangs," and takes pride in pointing out that the CBL office window is the only one on Pulaski Road without an iron grating protecting it. In the window is a large sign listing the names and amounts of renegotiated savings of CBL families.

And there was tension in the loose alliance between West and South Side people. The alliance endured from late 1968 through early 1970. But there were growing differences. Besides dissimilarities in age and education, many of the South Side people,

as occupants of newer homes, considered themselves removed from the original ghettos. All were committed to peaceful mass confrontation tactics. But some South Siders were embarrassed by the revivalist overtones of the West Side meetings. Most viewed their problem in strictly economic terms, and others were suspicious of the whites who surrounded, and possibly influenced, the lower-class West Side members. The South Side people held their own meetings in their own area of the city, but most of the decision-making seems to have been confined to the West Side office. The differences were further compounded by the semi-autonomous roles and styles of the two sets of leaders. Both Charles Baker and Clyde Ross of the West Side were former factory workers, both were from the same town in Mississippi, and both were paid employees of the Gamaliel Foundation. Relatively easygoing and cautious, they suggest the kind of participatory leadership common in the early days of the civil rights movement. Sidney Clark and Arthur Green, the two South Side leaders, were not employed by the Foundation; rather their involvement and speaking ability tended to project them as spokesmen. Clark, the buyer in whose name the South Side class action was brought, was the most vocal spokesman.

But there were also many areas of agreement between the two groups. Both mistrusted the legal process. Both worried that the involvement of lawyers might redirect or neutralize the energy of the organization. While most buyers were pleased by the filing of *Baker* and *Clark*, they did not feel that the two lawsuits were the only way of getting the contracts renegotiated, and they resented the end of the strike and the resumption of payments directly to the sellers. Some buyers say that the West Side sellers stopped discussing renegotiation of the contracts as soon as the strike ended, and also that they used offers of high settlements to the leaders in an attempt to undermine group solidarity, and offers of small settlements to encourage rank-and-file buyers to sign out of the plaintiff classes. In addition, a number of buyers with "permissive delinquencies" who had been "carried" by their sellers (many at good rates of interest) prior to the strike were now being required to pay up in full. Although the court-order agreement ending the strike had stated that delinquencies were to be amortized "over a reasonable period," the phrase was never clarified to the satisfaction of either side.

And so, over the objections of their lawyers, the buyers started a second payment strike. Of the numerous reasons now given by the buyers in justification of the second strike, three stand out:

A second strike would resume the economic pressure on the sellers while the pretrial process dragged on, and perhaps force them to renegotiate.

Second, once the suits had been filed and the first strike had ended, there was little the CBL could do to maintain its cohesiveness. Limited as it was to a single issue, the grass-roots movement was threatened with extinction once the lawyers moved the conflict into the courts. Most members lacked the time and skill to participate in the legal discovery work. Furthermore, the sellers' lawyers fought the buyers' having access to information obtained for purposes of the lawsuit. It was being used in CBL propaganda, they charged. Many buyers were bitter over the inequality of remedies available to the two sides, and they believed that without direct pressure on the sellers, both negotiation and the cases would fail.

Finally, the buyers wanted to use mass eviction publicity pressures to attack the state's eviction law. In 1968 an estimated 42,000 families, both renters and contract buyers, had been sued for possession under authority of this eviction law. One reporter estimated that in the first six months of 1969, 21,751 more eviction actions had been started. In August, 1969, a Chicago paper printed a story charging that the First Municipal District Court was an "eviction mill," with one judge sometimes ordering evictions at the rate of twenty a minute as landlords, their lawyers, or secretaries yelled "plaintiff" when defendants were called. Public attention was directed to the eviction courts.

The buyers had an additional reason for wanting to test the eviction law. In early 1969, Marshall Patner, an energetic, reform-minded lawyer who was then executive director of Businessmen for the Public Interest, had taken the case of a South Side family ordered evicted during the first strike. Since his days with Chicago Legal Aid, Patner had been slowly formulating arguments against the defense-and-appeal bond provisions of the statute; and during the eviction proceedings brought against Mr. and Mrs. Chester Fisher by Rosewood Corporation (one of the ten companies under Universal's name) he had attempted to raise the sales terms and conditions of their contract as a defense. The testimony was ruled "not germane to the issue of possession" and excluded. Patner then argued that the inability of the buyers to raise equitable defenses was a denial of due process and equal protection. Then, with a \$5000 appeal bond contributed to the Fishers from private sources, he took their case, *Rosewood*, to the Illinois Supreme Court. "Even before my work with Legal Aid," Marshall Patner says, "I was interested in the

forcible entry. I was doing some commercial work for a real estate firm under the eviction law. Most were hardship cases, but I did get into evictions eventually. I got to know the law much better than most people who would normally get in on the other side. From then on I was waiting for a chance to challenge it." Thus, when the CBL made its decision to call a second strike, Macnamara and a few of the CBL leaders were aware that *Rosewood*, directly challenging the eviction law, was pending before the court.

The co-counsels, Sullivan and Ming, were strongly opposed to the second payment strike. When informed of the plan, they held a hurried series of meetings with the buyers and attempted to discourage it by describing in detail the remedies available to the sellers under the eviction law, and expressing concern over the possibility of violence during the evictions. Some South Side CBL members also opposed the strike, and objected to having to risk their own homes for people who were delinquent in their contract payments. But both sets of leaders and both sets of buyers voted to risk mass evictions in order to carry out the strike.

The second withholding strike began on July 19, 1969. The procedure was the same as before: each month the leaders would collect money orders for contract payments, which each striker would make out to himself, and place them in escrow. Any buyer who saved his own money was not considered part of the official strike. Many were fearful of going against the court order that had ended the first strike; nevertheless, they withheld the money. By the end of the summer, eviction proceedings had been brought against 261 of the 552 striking families. The hearings were summary: Under the eviction law, the sellers' lawyers simply alleged that each buyer had been notified of his delinquency, and the buyer's response was limited to two responses: whether he had received notice and whether he owed money. Bonds for those who wanted to appeal the judgments were set on the average of \$4000, but some were as high as \$7500. At first the cases were being handled by a number of volunteer lawyers and law students, some of whom attempted to raise the contract terms as defenses. But most of the lawyers eventually withdrew from representing the strikers either because they felt the strikers were wrong to live in the houses without paying or because they felt that the strikers had not been overcharged in the first place, or because they felt the futility of trying to break the eviction pattern. Most of the law students withdrew because of this same futility, and because of the pressures from the

judges. Subsequently, many buyers began representing themselves before the judges, and raised questions far beyond the scope of the issue of possession. One judge, in telling a woman that his hands were tied because the law required her to pay up or get out, said, "Young lady, I'm sorry to say this but somebody has led you down the wrong path and has misled you. And I know who." "You're right, your honor," the woman replied. "They misled me in Mississippi. I came up here to get a better place to raise my family. I was misled in Mississippi, but I was misled worse here because there they don't hide their hands. I came here to get justice and you are sitting up there agreeing with me and at the end you are going to shake your head and say, 'There is nothing I can do. My hands are tied.' I am being misled *here!*'"

Jesuits from all over the country raised \$250,000 to be used as a lump-sum appeal bond, but the court would not permit this, and the money was returned to the donors.

The strikers began preparing for the evictions. In early December, 1969, former Cook County Sheriff Joseph Woods began the ordered evictions of South Side strikers. But as soon as his men had evicted Mrs. Elizabeth Nelson and nine children from their home and left the scene, a large crowd of CBL members, nuns, priests, rabbis, and other supporters moved the furniture back into the house. Sheriff Woods (a Republican who was then running for president of the County Board and who might have feared creating an issue which would allow the Democrats to mobilize black voters) then announced a moratorium on evictions until after Christmas. He also announced a policy of suspending future evictions whenever the temperature went below twenty degrees.

However, on January 5, twenty-five deputies attempted to evict another South Side family. This time more than two hundred CBL members and supporters were crammed inside the house when the deputies arrived. The deputies moved off and attempted a third eviction in another area. But again CBL members and supporters aborted the attempt by crowding into and surrounding the house.

Many CBL people take pride in disclosing the "map strategy" they used against Woods. Actually, both the sheriff's office and the CBL were involved in a ritual calculated to prevent violence on the eviction scenes. In fact, many CBL members believe that the evictions began on the more stable South Side because of the lesser danger of a confrontation between deputies and gang members there than in the West

"You're right, your honor. They misled me in Mississippi. I came up here to get a better place to raise my family. I was misled in Mississippi, but I was misled worse here because there they don't hide their hands."

Side neighborhoods. The CBL office would be warned beforehand, by "friends" inside the sheriff's office, of scheduled eviction sites. Word would go out to members and supporters by telephone that "Pharaoh is riding." Watchers would be posted to report the gathering and movements of the deputies to the group, which would be waiting on standby at 4 A.M. As soon as the intended house was known, buyers and supporters would rush to the house and surround it.

When the eviction party arrived at a house, one of the deputies would walk through the crowd, expecting to be blocked at the door. There would be some words exchanged about "obstructing a process of law," names would be taken, and the buyer would be cited for criminal trespass. The deputies would then leave the scene, and the cited striker would later surrender on his own and post bail. On one occasion a deputy was overheard telling a buyer who was blocking the door to his home: "Make it look good." It was a practical solution to a volatile situation, as demonstrated by the next eviction attempt.

On January 29, 1970, Sheriff Woods brought along two hundred deputies and Chicago Task Force Policemen. The movers were able to pick the lock, cut telephone wires, and put the furniture into the snow before CBL people could arrive on the scene. Sixteen security guards, hired by Universal Builders, were posted inside the house to prevent its reoccupation. But after the deputies and police had gone, CBL members and supporters trapped the guards inside the house. The guards fired some shots. Joseph Gibson, a South Side member of the strike, probably prevented the development of a more explosive situation by calming the crowd and then assuring the guards that they would not be harmed if they came out. The guards left the house. The crowd moved the furniture back. Soon after this attempt, Sheriff Woods announced that he would never again send two hundred men and spend \$25,000 of the taxpayers' money for a twenty-minute eviction, and ordered a halt to all eviction attempts until the courts had ruled in the cases of those families charged with criminal trespass. Universal Builders immediately sued Woods for \$7 million, and the circuit court threatened contempt citations.

In early February, 1970, two federal judges heard Tom Sullivan's arguments against the eviction law, but decided to abstain from passing on it because of Marshall Patner's case, *Rosewood*, which raised the same questions about the statute and was then pending before the Illinois Supreme Court. Then, in a remarkable display of legal red-tape cutting, Tom Sullivan managed to have a number of eviction cases

transferred from the circuit courts and consolidated with *Rosewood*. The court scheduled arguments in *Rosewood* for early March of that year.

There was also activity on another level. In early April, 1970, Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley agreed to intervene in the dispute. He had been petitioned to intervene once before, in early February. At that time an agreement had been worked out by lawyers for Universal Builders and Sullivan's group. But the South Side strikers, who were the ones under most imminent threat of eviction, had rejected the agreement because of the alleged political influence behind it and the fact that it did not mention renegotiation of the contracts. There were rumors that there were connections between high officials in Universal Builders and the Democratic organization, and some South Side people noted that before Mayor Daley came into the conflict, Universal Builders had not been in the mood for compromise. But it is just as probable that both Mayor Daley and Universal officials were concerned over the tension and potential racial conflict that the evictions might cause. Both Robert Ming and Tom Sullivan were equally concerned. When they presented the February agreement to the South Side strikers, tempers were high. And they were being criticized by both Judge Will and other lawyers for not keeping the people in line. Only about fifty South Side strikers accepted the first agreement.

There were additional reasons for them to request Mayor Daley to mediate a second agreement. By late February, Sheriff Woods had departed from the sham eviction ritual and gotten down to the serious business of actually clearing the houses. During the early morning two hundred deputies and policemen would arrive in buses, close off an entire South Side block to prevent CBL members and supporters from entering, and evict all striking families on the block. Each eviction took less than an hour: while the deputies and policemen closed off the street, professional movers went in and cleared the houses; then the deputies and officers moved back into the buses and drove off to the next eviction site, leaving at the houses security guards armed with shotguns. During the last few weeks of March and until the halt called by Mayor Daley before the second mediation session, Woods successfully evicted twenty-one striking families. Even while five hundred CBL members and supporters were downtown petitioning Mayor Daley to re-enter the dispute, Woods was evicting four more striking families.

On April 7 the sessions began in Mayor Daley's office. Buyers, sellers, and lawyers for both sides held separate meetings. Mayor Daley announced on tele-

vision, "What is now on the streets will be brought to the bargaining table, and settled there with the buyers and sellers sitting around it." The sessions were long. Reports from inside the office called them "fine meetings," "productive." The City Council passed a resolution endorsing the mayor's intervention. One CBL leader remarked: "I'd like to say something in favor of the mayor, this great mayor. He doesn't want anyone to leave these meetings, and he just keeps on hollering at you until you get an agreement."

Rumors went around: Mayor Daley was in contact with judges of the Illinois Supreme Court who were about to deliver their opinion in *Rosewood*; Mayor Daley was considering revoking the building license of Universal Builders if the latter did not call off the evictions; Mayor Daley would order Sheriff Woods to hold off the evictions until after the *Rosewood* decision had been handed down. Many buyers who engaged in this speculation were forgetting that Universal was no longer building houses, and that Sheriff Woods, a Republican and a county official, was acting under court orders. Many believed in the mayor's power to "control" the sellers, even if the courts could not. The faith that many lower-class Chicago black people have in Daley is one of his major political assets.

On April 8, after two sessions, Mayor Daley announced a solution that was "fair to all." Even the CBL leaders, walking out of his office, called it a "very good" settlement. Both Sidney Clark and Arthur Green signed it. The press called it "A Nice Day's Work for the Mayor," and hoped that the buyers would accept and tensions ease. Since the agreement was between Universal Builders and the South Side buyers, Mayor Daley arranged a meeting between them at the Sherman House. Again Sullivan and Ming urged the strikers to accept. There was a one-week deadline.

The April agreement to end the payment-withholding strike was almost the same as the previous agreement. The strikers were to pay all withheld money and all future installments directly to Universal. In return, Universal would deposit \$50,000 in an account and claim it and all eviction costs only if the Illinois Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the eviction law. If the court struck down the law, the \$50,000 would remain in the account, subject to court orders pending the outcome of *Clark v. Universal Builders*, and the striking buyers would not have to pay eviction costs. All contract sales would be reinstated, all eviction judgments vacated, and Universal

would not charge penalty interest rates for past defaults in payment. (This second agreement differed from the first in that Universal also promised to put aside an additional \$500 each month pending outcome of *Clark*, and indicated that it might consider refinancing some or all of the contracts.)

A number of South Side strikers rejected the agreement because it contained no specific provision for renegotiation of the contracts. Both Clark and Green were criticized for signing the agreement, and soon joined other strikers in denouncing it. "I think the South Side people *lost* in the mayor's office," one participant observes, "by not insisting that they were in there not to stop the evictions but to renegotiate."

Two days before the agreement deadline, the Illinois Supreme Court handed down its decision in *Rosewood*. Avoiding the constitutional questions, the court reinterpreted the state eviction law to allow contract buyers to raise equitable defenses in eviction proceedings. The court did not pass on the appeal bond provisions of the act, and only the few buyers who had posted appeal bonds could take advantage of the decision.

The strike was never officially ended. But most of the South Side strikers finally accepted the proposed agreement, turned their escrow money over to Universal, and waited for the outcome of *Clark v. Universal Builders* in the federal courts.

In Lawndale a number of families continued to withhold, but the back of the group effort was broken. Sheriff Woods handled the West Side evictions carefully, moving only a few families at a time. But some CBL members and supporters continued to move families back into the houses. Most strikers agreed to pay, however, when Judge Will, before resigning from the two class actions, announced that he would dismiss all strikers as plaintiffs from the lawsuit.

The seventy-to-eighty South Side buyers who rejected the agreement reached in Mayor Daley's office were eventually evicted by Sheriff Woods and his successor. Some moved back in and were evicted again, and again. The tension that had been building between the two sides of the organization now exploded into hostility and charges of "selling out." The core of South Side people who opposed ending the strike against Universal broke with the CBL and began their own organization, led by Sidney Clark and Arthur Green. This splinter group drew support from independent politicians, white students, and some vocal South Side businessmen. Neither Clark nor Green will discuss the grievances

"We are not compromising on anything. You people have struggled too long and too much. If anybody got any Uncle Tom ideas about sneaking in and messing up, you better just stay on out."

of the group or his own involvement, but it is clear that the mood was bitter. South Side buyers sympathetic to the West Side people were excluded from the splinter group's meetings, and attempts were made to produce some sense of vindication for its members. At one point a group of them "sat in" at the governor's office to protest Universal's policies; on another occasion they "evicted" the head of the Chicago FHA office. Once, when some of those living in their houses under criminal trespass charges were ordered jailed for a few days, supporters from Jesse Jackson's Operation Breadbasket demanded to be locked in the cells with them. Sidney Clark expressed the mood of the group during a public meeting. "We are not in the business of compromising," he said. "We are not compromising on anything. You people have struggled too long and too much. If anybody got any Uncle Tom ideas about sneaking in and messing up, you better just stay on out of the way because this is a *for-real* movement here. Universal is going to renegotiate these contracts. Universal is *not* going to make the money it made before."

The group's bitterness and mistrust were accentuated by the intervention of another outside influence. In the summer of 1970 Sherman Skolnick, a white legal researcher who chaired an organization called the Citizens' Committee to Clean Up Corruption in the Courts, was invited to address one of the meetings. Skolnick brought along "fact sheets" bearing the title "Who Represents Who In the Contract Buyers League?" which were passed out to the audience. The sheets denounced a number of judges; among them was the name of Federal Judge J. Sam Perry, who had been assigned to hear *Clark v. Universal Builders* following Judge Will's release of it. Skolnick also listed Albert Jenner as a bank director and charged his law firm with torpedoing civil rights cases in the past. Skolnick alleged that Jenner's firm had volunteered its services to the CBL in order to turn the thrust of the grass-roots movement into the courts where it could be killed off, and that the possibility of having to renegotiate "25,000 contracts in the city of Chicago" threatened a number of banks holding mortgages from the sellers. "If they couldn't turn this grass-roots movement around, their banks would go under. They need this blood money to exist on," he told the group, and suggested that the Catholic Church and the Democratic Party were also involved in the attempt to "sell out" the movement. A class action, he said, was "the work of the devil" because of its binding nature on those not immediately involved in bringing the action, and suggested that both *Clark* and *Baker* were "sellout" cases. "You think that some lawyer like Jenner, who makes \$2500

a day as a bank director, is going to get up feeling for poor working people who work two and three jobs to make their payments?" he said. "The first thing that'll happen if you win is that his bank will go under. So which side is he on? . . . What the hell do they give a damn about *your constitutional rights*? You've got to deal with first things first. Get this picture: A *bank director* went to court in your name, *Jenner*, and the case went to other *bank directors* who sit in robes and call themselves judges, and they sit next to the flag and tell you about the Constitution and all that bullshit! The only ones who are not bank directors are *you*!"

What is most significant about this meeting is that the people seemed to *want* to believe him. In late August, 1970, nine South Side buyers, including Sidney Clark and Arthur Green, filed a complaint in the Cook County Circuit Court. They named as defendants Jack Macnamara, Albert Jenner, Tom Sullivan, Robert Ming, John Stifler, Charles Baker, a Catholic bishop of Chicago, the Archbishop of Chicago, the Gamaliel Foundation, Gordon Sherman, and several of the white workers. Sherman Skolnick drafted the complaint.

The allegations attacked every level that had contributed to the Contract Buyers League. The Catholic bishop was charged with being the beneficial owner of contracts through a connection with one of Universal's ten companies; the Gamaliel Foundation was charged with having an interest in safeguarding the relationship between the Catholic bishop and Universal, funneling money to the lawyers disguised as "litigation costs," and with financing the CBL in order to ensure that the organization did not get out of hand; Baker was charged with being an agent for the lawyers, who allegedly used him to solicit employment from Clark, Green, and other South Side buyers; Jenner, Sullivan, Stifler, and Ming were alleged to have falsely and maliciously purported to be the attorneys for South Side buyers during the negotiations in Mayor Daley's office, and were charged with failing to carry out their instructions; Gordon Sherman was accused of funneling money through the Gamaliel Foundation to the lawyers. The list of damages claimed by the plaintiffs included the interference with their rights to seek redress of their own grievances; blockading of their rights to solicit their own lawyers; the alleged compromising of their rights and destinies through control of the lawsuit; and personal claims for public humiliation and the disruption of their property and family lives. They asked \$5 million in exemplary damages, \$5 million in actual damages, and costs.

The filing of this case in 1970 was not only sym-

bolic of the growing mistrust of white motives which continues to isolate blacks and whites. It was a renunciation of three years of dedication, sacrifice, and personal pain on the part of both black contract buyers and the people who supported them. The breach between the two classes of black people was widened. Ironically, the people with fewer middle-class pretensions—the West Siders—retained their perspective. The lawyers were hurt and irritated. Sullivan, Ming, Stifler, and Jenner immediately withdrew from handling the nine plaintiffs, but continued to represent the eighty other South Side buyers who had been evicted but who did not join in the suit. But they requested an injunction to prevent the nine buyers and Skolnick from interfering with their preparation of the two major lawsuits. They also requested a hearing to determine whether they had properly and adequately represented the class of plaintiffs. At the hearing it was determined that they had. Subsequently, charges against Gordon Sherman and the Catholic bishop were dropped, but the charges against all the others remain unchanged. They denied the charges but did not move for dismissal, in order to avoid providing the plaintiffs with additional ammunition. The case is still pending.

IV How It Ends

Despite the bitter split that threatened the CBL, the entire experience has been a successful one. Speculation on the outcome of either of the two federal court cases would be premature, but it is worthwhile to define some of the legal difficulties which Sullivan and the other lawyers are likely to face.

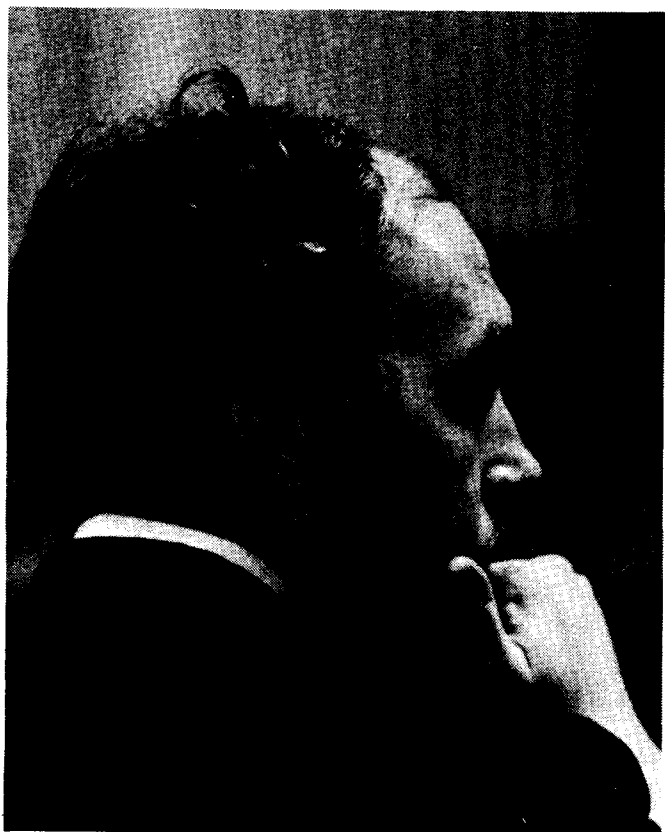
In doing so, one might consider the statement of one of the South Side buyers who joined in the suit against Sullivan. "There are enough laws on the books now to protect adequately all the people in this country," he said. "You don't have to go into court and start begging and pleading about rights and all that." But in point of fact, there are relatively few laws on the books that can provide meaningful remedies for contract buyers. A tenet of American law is that courts are extremely reluctant to interfere in contractual relationships. This is probably the reason why the early volunteer lawyers eventually decided that nothing could be done for the buyers. Most lawyers recognize that only a radical reconsideration of the policy reasons and values that support the inviolability of contracts can help the buyers.

Both *Clark v. Universal Builders* and *Baker v. F & F Investment* are challenging the federal courts to make such a reconsideration. But the fact that an essentially commercial appeal has been made within the context of a civil rights complaint charging racial discrimination tends to make the problem even more complex. Beyond the reluctance of courts to interfere in commercial areas there is a fundamental weakness in the two CBL cases based on the Supreme Court's decision in *Jones v. Mayer* in 1968. The discrimination alleged in the two cases does not fit the conceptual model on which *Jones* was decided. In the usual civil rights case, as in *Jones*, a black plaintiff alleges that a white defendant's treatment of him was not equal to that which was actually given to whites. But in the two CBL cases no such allegations were possible because of a lack of evidence that the sellers had ever made more favorable contract sales to whites. And in ruling that the CBL complaints had stated a claim under Section I of the 1866 Civil Rights Act, Judge Will raised the point that may well symbolize the real significance of the CBL experience:

Defendants contend that this holding would mean that every non-white citizen has a cause of action . . . to either rescind or reform . . . a purchase or leasing of either *real* or *personal* property by the simple allegation that he was charged more than a white person *would have been charged* or that he received less favorable terms and conditions than would have been given a white person.

The essential words are "would have been charged." In the absence of evidence that the sellers actually charged or would have charged whites less for similar property, the conduct does not seem to fit the traditional conceptual model. Moreover, Judge Will's analysis assumes that property in a changing neighborhood would have some value in a white market. These ambiguities could result in the CBL's losing the two lawsuits. On the other hand, as one commentator suggests, Judge Will could have been moving toward a new theory of liability, merging both civil rights and commercial law, and dispensing with the old conceptual model.

There is already considerable pressure on the federal courts to develop some approach to commercial discrimination. In Baltimore, where a grass-roots movement similar to the CBL has grown up, a civil rights complaint, *Montebello Community Association v. Goldseker*, was filed about a year after the Chicago lawsuits. Besides *Montebello*, similar sales practices are being challenged in Washington, D.C., and the CBL office has received calls and visitors from many other cities.



*At a Wednesday night CBL meeting:
Left, Tom Boodell.
Above, Mrs. Ruth Wells.
Below, other buyers.*



“Repeatedly, lawyers have been forced to improvise and to push beyond the frontier... not because of their own ingenuity... but because the people said, ‘Well, screw it, we’re going to do it this way anyhow.’”

Many people are convinced that without the two strikes and the evictions the courts would never have moved as far as they have in *Clark, Baker, Rosewood*, and related cases. Jack Macnamara is convinced of that much. “Everybody knows it,” he says; “if they deny it, they’re *blind!* *Nothing* would have happened if it hadn’t been for the activities of the people! The people themselves created a situation which forced people to respond on a somewhat part-time basis.” And Tom Sullivan says almost the same thing. “Repeatedly,” he says, “lawyers have been forced to improvise and to push beyond the frontier, so to speak, *not* because of their own ingenuity or anything that they started, but rather despite themselves and over their objections that it couldn’t be done, because the people said, ‘Well, screw it, we’re going to do it this way anyhow.’”

Among the buyers there is absolute certainty that nothing would have been done if they had not acted. In fact, many of the people who continued to withhold their payments after the major part of the strike was over did so because they did not believe that any relief would come through the courts.

The Contract Buyers League survived the strike, but it is not the same organization. One reason is that Jack Macnamara has left. During the evictions he had to be hospitalized for exhaustion. In late 1970 he asked to be released from his Jesuit vows. In June, 1971, he married Peggy O’Connor, a CBL volunteer. It was a Catholic wedding, but Mrs. Luceal Johnson was asked to stand beside the priest and speak. The young black man who once beat Macnamara also attended. A few months after the wedding Macnamara took a job with Applied Resources Incorporated in New York, and left Lawndale. His leaving was in accordance with the original goals of the old Presentation Church Project: “To move on, once the machinery for an organized and developing community was set up, and leave the people to function on their own.” During the three years of his involvement he had remained in the background, requiring the black members to make their own decisions. Macnamara’s departure was probably an extension of this same determination to make the black people aware of their own potential to fight for themselves. In fact, he said as much to them before leaving. “All kinds of credit is given at CBL meetings,” he told them. “People talk about all that white people are doing in supporting what you people are doing. They couldn’t have done a thing without you. The real heroes of the CBL are not the white men, and it’s about time that black people stopped saying thank you to

white men, except in a very general way, and started saying, ‘It’s about time you gave us what we had coming.’ A lot of people have said that I have done a lot for the people. I think the real thing is that the people have done a lot for me. And I’d like to thank them.”

But the people have also done a lot for themselves. Almost 200 buyers have saved close to \$2 million in principal and interest from renegotiated contracts. Some families have had their balances reduced by as much as \$40,000 under the CBL’s “fair-price formula.” Others have accepted smaller settlements from the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation, which took over a number of bankrupt savings and loan associations that had granted mortgages to speculators. Quite a number of other families have accepted smaller settlements from their sellers in return for signing out of the lawsuits. In many instances, according to CBL leaders, the sellers will also pay to patch up the outsides of the houses. An estimated 150 to 200 West Side people have announced themselves renegotiated and have dropped all contact with the CBL. Nothing within the power of the leaders has been able to make them disclose the amounts of their settlements. In some cases, Clyde Ross says, a family is told by the seller to remain silent because it is getting a better deal than all the others. The longer the West Side case is delayed, the fewer buyers there may be in the plaintiff class. In fact, when *Baker* is finally scheduled for trial, there might not be a plaintiff class.

Aside from their uncertain situations as plaintiffs, however, the CBL people have made a number of commercial accomplishments. The First National Bank of Chicago is now allowing Lawndale homeowners conventional mortgages at reasonable interest rates. And several insurance companies have been convinced by Clyde Ross that the underwriting of homeowners’ policies in “high-risk” areas can be profitable. Although the coverage is still not available to all black families in Chicago, as of January, 1972, more than three hundred CBL families had obtained new policies with broader coverage at an average savings of \$100 in annual premiums. There is also some talk of receiving rehabilitation money from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. But despite over three years of meetings with HUD and city officials, nothing substantial has developed. “I don’t know what will come of it,” Charles Baker admits, “but the government has already approved the loan. The only problem is getting it by the city. But if they do let it by, we’ll have \$100,000, and a lot of these people who have already been renegotiated might show up again.”

Although the CBL is still functioning, it is ques-

tionable how much longer it will be able to exert the influence it once had. Through 1971 it was more an administrative than a mass activity organization. In the small office on Pulaski Road, Clyde Ross, Charles Baker, Henrietta Banks, Ruth Wells, and a few white workers helped the people who wanted to apply for mortgages or insurance. At the peak of its appeal, in early 1970, the Wednesday night meetings could draw up to six hundred members and supporters on a subzero Chicago night. Budding politicians, sensing the arrival of a strong grass-roots organization, would attend the meetings with leaflets and encouraging speeches. By the next winter, however, the meetings seldom drew more than one hundred people. And few politicians. In June, 1971, when CBL held its third annual benefit at Presentation Church, fewer than three hundred members and supporters were present. By the end of last summer the meetings drew only thirty to forty members.

But Charles Baker believes that the CBL is just as effective now as it was several years ago. "We're still serving our purpose," he says. "Our purpose was to get the people relief from the contracts. Even though some of them are doing it on their own, they wouldn't have done it if it hadn't been for us."

There is also the matter of the practical knowledge the people have gained from their experience. "The good part about it," says Mrs. Luceal Johnson, who will not receive anything even if Baker is successful, "is that nobody will ever cheat me again *the longest day I live!* Nobody will ever sit back on his fanny and say, *'Here come a sucker. Let's get her!'* *Won't get me no more!* I'm *through* being cheated. They got to get up and live off the sweat of their *own* brows. And I'm so sure they ain't g'on cheat me no more until I'll move into a *tent* before I buy another house and get it *unjustly*. I'll move into a *pup-tent!* And I'm going to teach my children to don't buy one the way I bought it."

Both Charles Baker and Clyde Ross, former factory workers, now understand the fine points about contracts, mortgages, insurance, and interest. So do a number of the others. Charles Baker, speaking of his hopes for the eventual rehabilitation of Lawndale, says, "Talk about *freedom*? Since I've been in this I've seen the perfect way you can get freedom: with *this!*" and points to his head. The lessons are not lost. A policy at the meetings is that when there are no further questions from the audience, one of the leaders will ask the audience questions:

"What would be the first step if you were going to buy another house to keep from getting gyped like you did last time?"

"Have it *appraised!*" is the collective response.

The lessons are not lost.

The circle widens. A group of Chicago lawyers, following Tom Sullivan's suggestion, has started a fund that will supply scholarships for black students who want to pursue careers in law. By the end of 1971 there was more than \$90,000 in the fund, and twenty black students were enrolled in Chicago area law schools. Ten more will enter in the fall of 1972. Sidney Clark, the former South Side leader, is already attending law school at night, on his own.

On another level there is the matter of the whites who volunteered their help and support to the organization. Most of them were new to both experiences: the inner city and black people. Most of the Presentation Project workers had some initial difficulties with young black people in the Lawndale area, but all seem to have gained clearer perspectives on the nature of the many levels of tension between the two groups. One young man, Mike Gecan, a recent Yale graduate whose family lives in a "changing" area of Chicago's far West Side, has been trying to develop a white grass-roots organization to combat the fears aroused by the blockbusters who are said to be operating in the area. And one elderly white couple, regular attenders of all CBL meetings, say in response to the question, Why?, "It's the only thing left in the country that we know about where there's still a chance to see justice demonstrated." There are at least one hundred whites who no longer fear walking through the Lawndale community.

There is also the question of the money: the \$2 million in renegotiated savings and the inestimable amount that might result from the two lawsuits. Many of the people want to rehabilitate the houses and create businesses that will employ, and perhaps also rehabilitate, the young people of the community. "Don't tell me we can't operate our own businesses," Charles Baker says. "We've been operating the white man's businesses all our lives. You have to put your *own* business in your *own* neighborhood. People say they want Lawndale to be the best place in Chicago to live. There's nothing nice here now, but you've got a lot of vacant lots, and sooner or later somebody's going to start building. We got the best chance in the world to start out right, if we get citizen participation like we have in CBL." To implement this plan, the leaders have announced a project to buy some of the three hundred vacant lots in the area before urban renewal buys them and begins "relocating" the community.

Beyond the political and economic goals of the

"This is no trick! Tell them we are going to trial."

four-year struggle, the effort symbolized a conflict, for many of those involved, between the determined assertions of themselves and institutions that had kept them physically and psychically "in their place." To all of them the many orders to continue payments *directly* to the sellers ignored what was essentially an issue of human dignity. As Tom Boodell says, "The main difficulty most strikers had was the emotional problem of paying money to the sellers. CBL people were willing to pay anyone but the sellers, and almost on the basis that 'we don't care what happens to it afterwards.'" Many have had an opportunity to test the strength of these institutions on a number of levels. The contact has made some cynical and bitter. Many still believe that the two class actions are "sell-out" cases. One black woman, who bought a house vacated by an evicted South Side striker, laughs resignedly when asked about the two cases. "Is *that* still going on?" she asks. "It's a *joke!* We just have to learn there's no justice for the Negro. We have to learn to accept what they let us have." But many others have taken quite an opposite point of view. They are silently waiting for the trials to begin, and end.

In the late fall of 1971, Federal District Judge J. Sam Perry announced that trial of *Clark v. Universal Builders* would begin in early 1972. Until that time Maureen MacDonald and other white Gamaliel Foundation workers had been concentrating on researching West Side contract sales situations. They immediately dropped work on *Baker v. F & F Investment* and began compiling building cost comparisons and interviews in preparation for *Clark*, before Judge Perry ordered an end to discovery work.

Sullivan, Boodell, Stifler, and the other lawyers began going out to the Wednesday night meetings regularly: each week one of them would be present to explain the last steps in the trial preparation to CBL members, and to urge them to bring all South Side buyers still in the *Clark* plaintiff class to the

meetings so that their depositions could be taken. In an attempt to bring the two factions together again, one of the lawyers told the few South Side people in the audience that the depositions had to be completed as fast as possible, and encouraged them to spread the word on the South Side. "Tell them we are prepared to meet with them anyplace they want," the lawyer said. "The meetings will be over here," Charles Baker said.

The South Side people began coming over to the West Side meetings. On some Wednesday nights there would be fifty of them present; on other nights almost one hundred. They were quiet, and settled a bit uneasily into the chairs among the West Side people. Some members of the splinter group attended, and brushed off questions about its past. "I have nothing to say that's important," one man said, smiling with timidity. Others asked polite questions about *Clark*, wanting to know what was expected of them. Some had lost their homes during the evictions; some had not; some had never been involved in CBL. All of them were urged by the lawyers to tell other South Side families about the trial date and the necessary interviews. "Even if you hate *me*," Clyde Ross told them, his voice straining with the effort, "even if you can't stand your neighbor and don't want to talk to him, at least stop hating him long enough to tell him about the trial. This is no *trick!* Tell them we *are* going to trial."

Much, much more than the complaints of thirty-five hundred Chicago contract buyers has been joined into the two class actions. The implications are wide and deep. Countless black people in all parts of the country are watching Chicago and waiting for the outcome of the two CBL cases.

The two cases represent, as Clarence Darrow said in a 1926 trial involving other black people who tried to buy property, a "cross-section of human history." They represent, he said, "the future, and the hope of some of us that the future shall be better than the past." □

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FELLINI ON FELLINI

An Interview by Charles Thomas Samuels

Q: There is a critic inside you, too, isn't there?

A: Yes, and once in a while I stab him.

CHARLES THOMAS SAMUELS: I'm interested that you, a man of the cinema, should be so fascinated with the theater.

FEDERICO FELLINI: I'm not fascinated by theater alone; I'm fascinated by all forms of spectacle: theater, circus, cinema itself. These all contain congenial elements; when I show the atmosphere of show business, I speak of myself, because my life is a show. I am a man wholly devoted to spectacles; I am one of those who tell stories to others.

S: Both as a writer and director. Could you have been only a writer?

F: In a certain sense, I am a literary man. The exigencies of production require me to write down what I intend to do, not only for myself but to instruct my co-workers. I must tell the set designers about the world which the actors will inhabit, must send notes to the wardrobe mistress, must even keep records of what the film costs. I started my career writing story ideas for other directors, but now that is only the necessary first step in clarifying my own conception and thus in bringing me closer to making a film. A story idea merely fires the furnace, and a screenplay merely instructs the various sectors that must work to produce a film.

S: Did you become a director rather than a writer because you enjoy that audience response which the writer never sees?

F: But directors don't see it either.

S: You can go into the theater, as you must certainly have done . . .

F: No.

S: Never?

F: Occasionally, I've accompanied a film to a festival or a premiere, but I've always felt distracted and detached. A film's success with the public doesn't concern me. I made the film I had to. Then it becomes a prostitute, lives a commercial life; what it does for

the public is the public's business. Working for the public doesn't interest me. I think that my films are produced by a wholehearted sense of vocation.

S: In *Variety Lights*, you show the theater with obvious love, but you also ridicule it. This is common in your films. It's as if while photographing a beautiful woman you showed her dirty feet.

F: But the dirty feet are also beautiful. I try to love everything in life, not only what we usually consider proper, honest, charming. I always like to show both sides of a thing.

S: So you show both sides of the theater because they both exist.

F: They exist together. The ideal and disillusioning sides of theater are two faces of a single truth. Both represent man.

S: In the process, though, you deglamorize theater; you want to present show business.

F: I don't want to do anything. I never ask myself about my goals; and if I asked and answered, what good would it do? That's the critic's and the public's business. For me, the important thing is not to know why I do something but simply to do it.

S: *Variety Lights* also gives us our first example of something more obvious in your later films: the Fellini parade. Why are you so fond of showing actors walking in parade formation?

F: There is no answer that would satisfy you. I could invent ten answers, but if you want something sincere . . .

S: At the beginning of *The Clowns* you present yourself as a little boy watching the circus. Couldn't this love of parades have that origin?

F: I don't know. An artistic creation has its own needs which present themselves to the author as indispensable. If I wanted to, I could explain that when I show a parade I am showing the facade of life, people displaying themselves, and so forth.

S: That's interesting.

F: But it's not true. More likely, the truth of the matter is this: the sequence in question forces you to accept it nonrationally because you sense that artistic fatality that is independent of any explanation.

S: You've said that all your films have the same theme and seem so alike to you that you can't even

say which you prefer. But I've noticed specific similarities: in situation and images. For example, in *Variety Lights*, there is a scene in a piazza where a gypsy—

F: Plays a guitar.

S: Right. Slightly altered, that scene reappears in *The White Sheik* when the fire-eater performs in the piazza. The finale of the orgy in *La Dolce Vita* takes the form of Marcello riding on a woman as if she were an animal. This also takes place in the nightclub scene of *Variety Lights*. There is the famous sea beast in *La Dolce Vita* and another in *Satyricon*. I could go on. Why do you repeat these things?

F: There is no answer. A film takes form outside your will as a constructor; all genuine details come through inspiration. And what do we mean by inspiration?—the capacity for making direct contact between your unconscious and your rational mind. When an artist is happy and spontaneous, he is successful because he reaches the unconscious and translates it with a minimum of interference. Unfortunately, we all make mistakes because education, culture, personal tics, and personal taste deform things that otherwise would be so pure and instead mark them with the taints of our conditioning. The transformation from dream to film takes place in the awakened conscious state, and it's clear that consciousness involves intellectual presumption which detracts from creativity. Thus, an artist who realizes a dream always senses a diminishment. Whenever you ask me why I did this, that, or the other thing, I can only answer that this particular moment brought me that perspective, light, words, characters, face.

S: I'd like to continue discussing your assertion that realizing the idea diminishes it.

F: Yes. I think, for example, that Nervi's idea of a bridge must have been more beautiful than the bridge he finally designed; he thought of Bridge and only built a bridge. That "a" sets limits on an idea that was originally unlimited. An image in the unconscious is not framed; it has the fascination of the vague and indefinite, of the inexpressible. This obscurity makes it more exciting. But when you realize the idea, you take away the mystery, the imprecision that makes things more than just themselves. The authentic, happy artist is one who maintains some sense of the arcane.

S: What did Antonioni contribute to *The White Sheik*?

F: He wrote a story for Ponti, which he was going to direct, and Ponti called me and Pinelli to turn it into a screenplay. There really was no contribution by Antonioni to *The White Sheik* except for that original contract with Ponti. We gave Antonioni screen credit, but actually we never even saw him.

S: Do you see any point of similarity between his films and yours?

F: I have seen very few of his films. We share the same

passion, the same lack of reserve, the same sense of authentic vocation. But I never give judgments about colleagues. An artist can no more judge another artist than one child can judge other children. Each artist has his particular vision. You can't wear someone else's glasses; they would fit badly and you wouldn't see. The artist's glasses only work when they are put on nonartists, whom they move, exalt, surprise. Of course, sometimes private and esoteric material becomes part of a more general discourse. It's clear that Joyce is appreciated by other artists because his vision of the world is marked by that neurosis, conflict, and unhappiness which all artists share.

S: *The White Sheik* first shows your penchant for fast cutting. For example, at the beginning of *Juliet of the Spirits*, when Juliet puts on her makeup . . .

F: You can't ask an author why he put an adjective in a sentence.

S: Some authors do answer.

F: I'm one who doesn't. . . . Poe wrote an essay telling—concededly—exactly how he wrote "The Raven." If you ask me how I shot a particular scene, I can answer for three days with a pack of nonsense. There is only one answer; I had to shoot it that way.

S: I don't think so. [Fellini curses.] It's interesting for other people to learn what you thought you were doing.

F: What use is all that? Look, everything that seeks to clear up an obscure process is totally academic. You only invent categories. I do things and then I forget them. I seem to recall there is a hurried effect in the scene you speak of, but that is because Juliet realizes that her husband is coming home and is in a hurry to make herself up for him. So the cuts mirror her agitation.

S: But even in the *Satyricon*, when there isn't such an explanation . . .

F: Where?

S: At the beginning, for example, we see Ascylltus crawling on the floor of the baths, and the camera moves.

F: The shots in the *Satyricon* are fixed.

S: But the effect is of flying. . . .

F: The shots are fixed to suggest a lost world contemplated through a series of frescoes.

S: Why, then, do you impose movement by having Ascylltus crawl back and forth while delivering his lines?

F: I wanted to give immediately a sense that he was an animal that could not be restrained. So he was naked, perspiring, moving on the floor—with muscles like something alive.

S: At the end of *The White Sheik*, the Catholic Church becomes the ultimate spectacle. The characters run off to St. Peter's as if they were going to a movie.

F: Of course. Seen from the perspective of Ivan Cavalli and his relatives, the Church is a spectacle, like the Colosseum or the Quirinale, something to tell others about back in the provinces.

S: And the Church always fails to do anything worthwhile in your films. For example, in *8½*, when Guido's producer asks him to visit the Cardinal for technical advice, all the man does is recite some ridiculous words of Diomedes.

F: Well?

S: Is this what you think of the Church: that it always fails?

F: My feeling about the Church is so clear: a reaction against my education that nevertheless bears fruit. Even going to prison can be a precious, necessary conditioning for a creative nature. Tyranny, slavery, superstition—all those things that tend to restrain the vital instinct—provoke in a creative nature an opposite response. While reacting, he may become a bit deformed because his stimulus is oppression, but he is always liberated in another direction. When an artist—I use this word too often, but what should I say—a plumber? . . . OK, when a plumber . . . No. The animosities of a creative nature are only pretexts to stimulate his creativity. An authentic or serious artist—and when I say “artist” I mean only a certain kind of individual or a certain psychological type—when an artist exhibits antipathies he is not to be wholly identified with them. One artist needs antipathies; another, ideology; another, love; another, memory; depending on the season and his temperament, every artist needs one or another of these things simply as a pretext that will fire his creative furnace. You understand, I am speaking only of real artists, men of personal vision. For such men, after it has been used to create a work of art, an idea is used up. They can then use a totally opposed idea so long as it will inspire another fantasy.

S: When Ivan goes searching for Wanda, he crosses a square and is almost run down by a parade of *bersagliere*. Why?

F: As the professor has noticed, *The White Sheik* is a satiric film. Thus while Wanda follows the White Sheik as her dream romantic hero, the husband follows his own mythology, consisting of the Pope, decorum, respectability, *bersagliere*, the nation, the king.

S: You know perfectly well what your films mean. Let's go further. I think of the great moment in *The White Sheik* when Ivan comes out of the *questura*'s office and a clerk asks him to help carry some papers. When they move the papers about, great clouds of dust emerge. This is your comment on Italian bureaucracy, isn't it?

F: I only said that I can't explain my means of expression: why something merges with those distances, those vistas, that rhythm. But when you speak of those papers and clouds of dust, it is clear that the thing didn't happen by accident.

S: I think I know why you did it, but . . .

F: If we both know, why talk about it?

S: Presumptuously, I am searching for the truth.

F: The truth. You know what that is. The films are the truth. You confuse the truth because you make

me say silly things just to please you. Something comes into my head; I say nonsense.

S: Let me ask a question that will take us past *The White Sheik*. Your first three films are neorealist

. . . . By the time you get to the *Satyricon*, however, you're saying things like this: “I read all these books about Rome so as to forget what Rome was like.”

F: I can't be accused of what I say in interviews.

S: Haven't you become less realistic as your career has progressed?

F: What does “realistic” mean? For me, the only real realist is the visionary because he bears witness to his own reality. A visionary—Van Gogh, for instance—is a profound realist. That wheat field with the black sun is his; only he saw it. There can't be greater realism. Words like “neorealist” are just comfortable tags. Too much has been made of it. DeSanctis wasn't a neorealist; he was a follower of D'Annunzio, who took calendar-art shots of the sea. If we define neorealism properly—and definitions mean nothing to me—Rossellini is the only true neorealist. DeSica is not a realist. He merely adapts sentimental romantic rhythms to stories that Zavattini tells out of ideological necessity. If by “neorealism” you mean the opposite of manufactured effects, of the laws of dramaturgy, spectacle, and even of cinematography, then Rossellini has made the only neorealist films. Neorealism was mistaken for social realism. When people saw a badly made shack they mistook it for neorealism. When they saw two tramps, they said: “Neorealism!”

S: Still, there is a distinction. When Ivan goes to the *questura* who thinks he's mad, the man offers him a cigarette to pacify him, and Ivan politely reaches for one that has been cut, but the *questura* says: “No, take one of the whole ones.” That detail refers to a specific set of social circumstances, and there are fewer and fewer such details in your films. Or am I wrong?

F: That story was recounted like an anecdote, so it had to be told in a certain way, with its own vision and laws. An artist evolves; he goes through changes like any other man. When I was ten I loved lollipops, but now I love other things. The seasons of a creative nature are conditioned by the seasons of the man himself. Impoverishment, enrichment, falling in love with certain styles and ideas—these changes occur, but I don't find them important. To myself, I seem always to be making *The White Sheik*.

S: The film seems to me your greatest, but there are small imperfections. When Sordi takes the girl into the boat in order to seduce her, some of the background shots are sets, aren't they?

F: Yes. That was the first scene I directed myself, because earlier Lattuada had given me technical advice. I had done little landscape shots, but nothing more. This was my actual debut as a director—I mean with forty people looking on—that terrible Roman troupe, looking at their watches, and with faces that would happily end your career. When we started

shooting, we and the camera were on the high seas in an enormous boat, and the little boat with Sordi and Bova was in front of us. It was a very complicated scene, because the ocean obviously makes unpredictable movements. You look through the viewfinder, but by the time you are ready to shoot, everything has changed. It was terribly difficult for a beginner. In fact, I shot nothing that first day. I couldn't tell the sea to stop; it was a disaster. My legendary reputation for audacity began at this moment, because this is what I did. The next day I had a big hole dug on the beach and placed the camera in it. I placed the boat with Bova and Sordi on the beach and shot up at them. For a while it worked well, but after two hours the tide turned and you saw the waves hitting the sand, so, later I had to include some shots to cover this up. However I could give you an aesthetic justification: cinema is an art of illusion, and sometimes the illusion must show its tail.

S: In the scene toward the end of the film, when Ivan finds Wanda in the hospital, we track down the corridor and see a catatonic wheeled by in a crib.

F: It's a hospital!

S: Behind the police there's a nun with a moustache. Why?

F: Certain forced vocations make the organism grow irregularities. Obligatory chastity, like that of a nun, can well bring such hair to the face. Satisfied?

S: All these touches provoke a charge against you. People point to them and say that you are reveling in the grotesque merely to amuse us.

F: I think it is significant if I amuse you. And the nun belongs there. After all, Ivan and Wanda want to see reality in an idealized way, so it is clear that the author, at such a moment, puts a nun with a moustache, instead of one with a Fra Angelico face, in order to provide some contrast.

S: But to the general point: people said that *Juliet of the Spirits* was almost a freak show. . . .

F: I say it isn't true. Furthermore, I'd ask to see the faces of these people. I would put a mirror before them and ask them to say: "Fellini puts monsters in his films." Perhaps they don't see or recognize themselves.

S: I'll switch to *I Vitelloni*. Why does the Sordi character dress like a woman at the carnival?

F: Because at a carnival one wears a mask.

S: But the whole film seems unified by examples of deficient virility.

F: There is also a legend that I am impotent. "Starting with neorealism, by the time of the *Satyricon* Fellini has reached the buttock stage."

S: I'm not identifying the characters with you. I'm merely saying that all the men in the film are missing—

F: Their mothers. They all come from the provinces.

S: Then the theme is deficient masculinity?

F: It's a story of men who haven't grown up, and the infantile state is ambiguous. There can be no heroic posturings, no virile poses.

S: *Il Bidone* was intended for Humphrey Bogart. Were you satisfied with Broderick Crawford?

F: I thought of Bogart because the confidence man who told me the story looked like him: the same dry, wolfish face, a face desperate with the knowledge he would end badly. I always have models in my mind. So at the beginning, I say I will use Mae West and the Marx Brothers for the *Satyricon* as part of my quest for the ideal faces that will realize my characters. But by the time I started shooting *Il Bidone*, Bogart was sick, so I used Crawford.

S: Why do you always use the same music in your films?

F: Because all have the same author, story, atmosphere. Moreover, Nino Rota writes the music in my company. It is a harmonious collaboration that I haven't felt like changing. His music is a kind of frame that is very true for my story and images.

S: In *Il Bidone*, you give the first of many pictures of corrupt middle-class life. But I'm struck (for example, at the party that Basehart and Masina attend) that you can't think of anything more squalid than those men who ask the girl to strip so that they can see if she's wearing falsies.

F: You want something more corrupt: that's your problem. I don't want to shock. I only want to be true to the story I'm telling.

S: What about the orgy that ends *La Dolce Vita*?

F: *La Dolce Vita* was considered scandalous—all over the world! The police wanted to take my passport away; they wanted to kill me, to put me in prison! The title of that film came to have a meaning exactly the opposite of what I'd intended. I wanted the title to signify not "easy life" but the "sweetness of life."

S: That's not the way it comes out. Marcello looks like someone wallowing in trouble. Think of that scene in which he sees an angelic girl, played here and in *8½* by Claudia Cardinale.

F: That is a result of the myth produced by a Catholic upbringing: a wish for some purity, something morally complete and angelic—stamped at the bottom of our minds and leaving us with a nostalgia for something rarefied.

S: If he could attain that, wouldn't he be better off?

F: No, he likes *la dolce vita*. His infantile fancy has its form of integrity, but *la dolce vita* is very fascinating.

S: At the end, he makes a gesture of resignation.

F: No, he says, "I don't hear. I don't understand." It could also be considered a bantering gesture: "I don't hear you because I don't want to hear you."

S: Why did you revive the character of Cabiria after *The White Sheik*?

F: Because I liked her nocturnal vagabond spirit that is so typical of Rome. In *The White Sheik* she was a minor character: a night spirit in love with flame. In *Nights of Cabiria* she became something larger: a woman in love with love.

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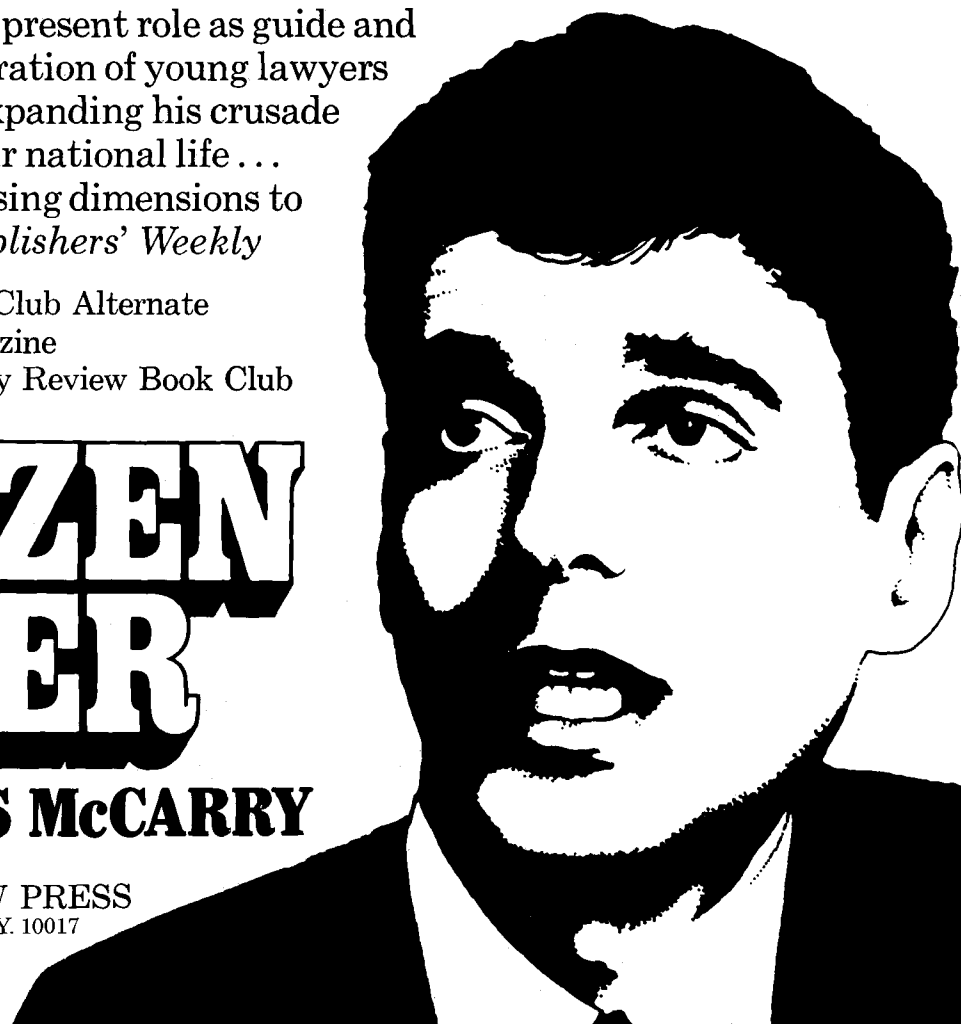
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S: One of the great touches in the film is the mascara that runs down Cabiria's face in the final close-up. Was that planned?

F: Everything is planned. Making a film is like putting an astronaut into space.

S: Don't you ever improvise?

F: No. "Improvisation" is an offensive term to an artist. I don't improvise; I try to keep myself open to all suggestions, to all changes that occur while the film is growing day by day. When I start a film I know where I want to end up because I have already gone through all those evocations and that magic which cause a fantasy to take shape. But after the first two or three weeks a film assumes its own will, face, and voice; it becomes a different person whom I do not know until I begin to make it. Therefore, if I tried to be strictly faithful to all my original plans I would confine the film. I prepare everything, more than is necessary; but then I want the film to grow and tell me itself what I must do. This is not improvising; this is humble service to a creature of one's own that is growing and has its own needs. When you start the film you don't yet know what the faces will look like or how much the props will weigh. I can write a three-page scene which is very beautiful and then suddenly discover that a certain light accomplishes all that those three pages did. I don't improvise; my films grow as part of a vital process.

S: In *La Dolce Vita*, when Sylvia and Marcello are in the Trevi Fountain, the water is shut off. Why?

F: It is a trick of dramaturgy.

S: Are you upset by those who argue that this action symbolizes an aborted moment of sexual contact?

F: Everything in life is symbolic. At this moment, I also wanted that silence, that moment of suspension between them.

S: Do you think that Steiner is a convincing intellectual?

F: In Rome there are many such theatrical intellectuals. And not only Italians are this way. Look at Norman Mailer.

S: He'd like to be thought an intellectual, but he isn't one.

F: So much the better for him.

S: Why do you end the film with the sea beast?

F: It's a childhood memory of a sea monster that a storm had thrown up on the beach at Rimini. The beach was very crowded, full of journalists. I recall that Beltrame, who used to paint covers for *La Domenica del Corriere*, used this monster one Sunday. It remained vivid in my memory and I always wanted to make use of it. I wanted to place it in the scene when the Vitelloni take a walk by the sea, but it seemed too powerful an image for that. I even thought of ending *I Vitelloni* with the monster, but that would have been excessive. But in *La Dolce Vita* it seemed to fit.

S: Why?

F: As an expression of absurdity, irrationality.

S: Because of its subject as well as its many brilliant

inventions, *8½* is probably your most important film; but the film has been attacked as a grab bag, an empty sack into which you could put—arbitrarily—whatever entered your mind.

F: Who said that? *8½* got fabulous reviews all over the world! And anything can be called an empty sack, even *The Divine Comedy*—to give an example.

S: You said that the film was your attempt to make friends with yourself, fearlessly and without hope.

F: I say so many things. But, even though I said that, it is true.

S: But doesn't the film ask that Guido be forgiven for all his wrongs?

F: What wrongs? Who is guilty? No one is guilty. We become guilty only when we try to live up to schemes that don't conform to reality. I, who am fifty, would be guilty if I tried to live like an eighteen-year-old.

S: If one is honest, he isn't guilty?

F: One is guilty only for having regrets. Perhaps Guido is guilty in that sense.

S: Are you using the critic in the film to raise all the objections that the audience might raise?

F: No, that critic represents an intellectual who is rarefied, unvital, stifling. Also, for a creative nature like Guido's, criticism is profoundly foreign. He cannot accept that mentality and so has to kill it. Otherwise, he would not be able to give full vent to his fantasies, his world of games and marvels.

S: But there is a critic inside you, too, isn't there?

F: Yes, and once in a while I stab him. I am a builder, and building involves both intuitive and rational operations, but I have to reach an equilibrium. I know all the categories, and I must choose; but choosing means judgment, which delimits things. I need that critical sense that selects, eliminates, and chooses by taking account of my experience.

S: Doesn't a critic do the same thing—even though he doesn't create films or plays but merely writes about them?

F: I don't know. The critic, merely by saying: "I am a critic," inflates himself and causes himself to see not what exists but what he thinks ought to exist. But things are only what they are. Therefore, the critic is usually mistaken. A truly humble critic would look at things from the inside, not from the outside. If the thing is vital and you look at it from your external point of view, you will never understand but will only project onto it what you think it should be. When a critic tells how the work should be according to his taste, which has been formed by a certain culture and certain artists, he is judging by what is congenial to him. That is totally alien to me.

S: Not totally. You are very concerned about critics. You are hostile to them but they crop up in your films, even in *The Clowns*. There is a scene in which you and a critic sit discussing the film, only to be covered by overturned pails.

F: He's not a critic; he's just a newspaperman.

S: But he is raising a critical question: "What does this mean?"

F: It's a stupid question.

S: *You* consider it stupid. Why don't you leave it alone, then? Why do you keep creating characters who put this question to your alter ego so that you can debunk it? If it's so clearly stupid to you, why don't you just ignore it?

F: Because my pictures are also about stupidity.

S: Who is the girl in white in *8½*?

F: She is the most disturbing sign of Guido's impotence, and he projects through this figure all his own confusions: his desire for an ideal woman who would tell him, both as man and artist, what to do; she is his nostalgia; his childish desire for protection; his romanticism. These are all embodied in a figure who mocks him because she is only an abstraction.

S: Why was there so long a hiatus between *Juliet of the Spirits* and your next film?

F: I had written the scenario for a film that would have been my most beautiful (*The Voyage of Mastorna*), but through a mysterious series of circumstances, I never was able to make it. I got sick, for a long time. You know, it's good sometimes to fall sick because illness ruptures the daily routine and forces you to think about things in a new way. One imagines he will always be vital and active. Suddenly, there comes a pause. As a result, new fantasies emerge.

S: Why did the new fantasy become *Toby Dammit*?

F: Why, why, why! I was still under contract with DiLaurentis to make *Mastorna*, and so was in total confusion. Then along come these French producers who beg me to participate in a multi-episode film, although I have never agreed to work with anyone else. But they assured me that of the three stories, I would make one, Bergman another, and Welles the last. So I said yes. Then it turned out that they had lied about Bergman, and Welles, who didn't trust them, refused to sign. I continued anyway, simply because this was a way of freeing myself from DiLaurentis. When they told me my partners were to be Malle and Vadim, I could have legally refused. With me, Welles, and Bergman, three visionary artists whose images have richness of meaning, there would have been some common quality in this homage to Poe. That's why I signed, not for monetary considerations. But you see, I was emerging from a period of crisis; I was overwhelmed with troubles, had not worked for two years. I could have broken the contract, but that didn't seem right. So I proceeded. And now I am glad I did because—although I'm not able to judge my own work, because I never see it when it is finished—I think this film is perhaps my most representative.

S: I agree, and that's why I'd like to ask several questions about it. First, where did you get the idea of characterizing the devil as a young girl?

F: In Poe's story, which, as you know, was only my jumping-off point, the devil is a man with a black cape and a beard. I didn't like that; it seemed too eighteenth-century to me. Moreover, I thought this was the wrong kind of devil for a drugged, hippie actor. His devil must be his own immaturity—hence, a child.

S: When Toby enters the airport, we see many fantastic things going on. There is an ugly man pawing a cowboy, a girl standing at a bar next to a sort of Fu Manchu, and so on. Why do you fill the background with such grotesque figures?

F: The airport in Rome is like that. Furthermore, this is all seen from a drugged perspective.

S: Why don't you tell us why Toby sold his soul?

F: You're asking too much from a short episode.

S: During the drive through Rome, there are sometimes sets and sometimes real objects. For example, the bus going under the aqueduct is a painted flat.

F: I do this sort of thing very often.

S: Why?

F: Because I like to joke. It makes the image disquieting. And the whole tale is meant to have that effect: a drive toward death. Even that cowboy you mentioned has a mask on his face. These are all small tricks.

S: One of the tricks I'd like to ask you about concerns the head of Terence Stamp at the end of the film. It seems so phony . . .

F: The film is make-believe.

S: I feel the need of something stronger there.

F: Why, isn't that head frightening?

S: No. Nor is it frightening in the *Satyricon* when Alain Cuny's head is cut off and falls into the sea. That image is marvelous, but it seems to me to be adulterated when the body hits the deck and the top of the torso is obviously wax.

F: Actually, we really cut the head off, but since we had two takes and Cuny had only one head. . . .

S: In an article you wrote for *Show* in 1964, you said you would never adapt a literary work. What made you change your mind?

F: *Satyricon* is a work in fragments. I didn't illustrate a book; the book was simply a pretext.

S: Why did you cast Tanya Lopert as the Emperor?

F: Because she was the producer's daughter. But she also gave a feeling of neurotic asexuality, so that one can't tell what sex she is—and that was fitting.

S: Why do you so emphasize sickness and deformity in this film?

F: I don't think I do. I wanted to present an unknown world about which we know only impressions, mostly gleaned from an idealized neoclassicism. I wanted to forget all that and make a science-fiction film, as I've often said. It is the discovery of an unknown planet in which the forms are disquieting. Moreover, as you know, there was no penicillin at that time, no antibiotics, so terrifying illnesses must have been common. A long life then lasted twenty-seven years. Most people must have been sick.

S: Why don't you show the homosexuality more directly? All we see is one man kissing another's wrist.

F: I wasn't making a film about homosexuality as seen by a prurient Catholic. I wanted everything to appear as if on a fresco. What did you want, men kissing on the mouth? . . .

S: In the scene at the *pinocoteca*, a platform loaded

with people passes in front of the window. Why?
 F: I will never tell you.
 S: Is it a secret?
 F: It was pretty. . . . I liked to see those people go by. . . .
 S: Why do the guests jump up and down in Trimalchio's bath?
 F: Because I liked that human wave.
 S: There is no other reason?
 F: Look, in the *Satyricon* the actors are always doing bizarre things because they have to evoke a world that we don't know. They look like Italians whose gestures seem incomprehensible to an American tourist.
 S: Why did you include the episode of the widow of Ephesus?
 F: I thought of cutting it out, but since it is one of the more significant of Petronius' fragments, I was sure that eliminating it would have sent the whole cultural world of universities, Latinists, and professors of Roman history into an uproar. So I let it stand.
 S: But there has been an uproar anyway, a claim that you've violated the spirit of Petronius.
 F: Who knows what that really is? So little of Petronius survives. How can we tell his point of view? To understand that we would need to have the whole of the novel, to learn how the characters end up. I was faithful to the fragmentary state of Petronius, that ruined temple which is more fascinating because we project onto its broken pillars all the past that has vanished. I am not an illustrator of other men's work. I was faithful to the darkness that surrounded the *Satyricon*, to all that which is incomplete, interrupted, mutilated, and therefore more seductive.
 S: Let's move on to your last film. Why did you include Anita Ekberg in *The Clowns*?
 F: I met her one day, and I like Anita. Besides, she has a circus personality.
 S: Why the scene with Victoria Chaplin?
 F: I met her in Paris where I needed to shoot a small scene of two clowns auditioning for Buglione (which I had witnessed in real life). I asked her and her boyfriend to play the scene because they live in the circus world. Also, it was a way of paying homage to her father.
 S: At the beginning of the film, why do you show men in jail also watching the circus tent as it goes up?
 F: For no particular reason. It's just that in Rimini, where I was born and this scene is taking place, there was a jail near the piazza that the circus used.
 S: We've finally arrived at *Roma*. What can you tell me about it?
 F: Nothing much. It is a film I am making in stages because the production is so difficult to organize that I've insisted we stop from time to time. It's a film unlike any other—but, as always, it seems to be turning out like all my previous films. It's a conversation about the city. I can't say more now.
 S: It's said that you are surrounded by friends and

admirers. Isn't that rather dangerous for an artist?
 F: Surrounded by friends? I am always alone. I have only about two good friends, and them I see rarely. I am surrounded by people who want to work in my films, by journalists.
 S: Are there no friends who appreciate you so that you have confidence in their criticism?
 F: Maybe not enough of them. I don't know. But anyway, I don't like to talk about my work. It is impolite.
 S: Impolite?
 F: My work is so representative of my personality that talking about one is like talking about the other. It isn't polite to talk about yourself all the time.
 S: People are interested in your work, and as you've said, your work is you. The one interest leads to the other. We can't make a separation. There is even an adjective: Felliniesque. You've made yourself public property.
 F: I don't want to repeat myself. I don't want to become presumptuous or ridiculous. I don't want to become an external being whom I must look at in a detached way. I want to be free. It is dangerous to identify with the public image one has made. Success is a construction that it is so easy to become accustomed to. But one has to forget, to think one has done nothing. I am not speaking of humility but of freedom. If I am obliged to talk and talk about Steiner, Gelsomina, and the others, I am forced to remain tied to what I have done, whereas I want to forget it all.
 S: What do you regard as the distinction between a simple entertainment and a work of art?
 F: I don't want to talk about entertainment versus art. I want to distinguish between a film with an author and one that is made for consumption. A film made by an author reflects a human creature and his ideas. The other, which may contain pleasant images, shows you nothing, and you like it precisely because it is unreal. Why does a commercial film succeed? Because it doesn't disturb the spectator. He leaves the theater in the same darkness with which he entered it. People who go to these films don't want to be disturbed; they don't want responsibility; they want to stay asleep.
 S: As you say, your films represent an individual consciousness; that's what makes them art. It also makes people interested in your consciousness and causes you to be interviewed, and so forth. It's your excellence that has trapped you.
 F: I accept this conclusion, since you want to leave the impression that our interview is useful. And it is. I only want you to understand why I have been so reluctant; not because I am uncouth or ungrateful to someone who has studied my work with such care and enthusiasm. My reaction springs more from timidity. This long and searching talk about past work ties me to exactly what I want to forget.
 S: In 8½, Guido is constantly asking to be freed.
 F: I am Guido. □

AMERICAN JOURNALISM'S TEN HARDIEST PERENNIALS

by Todd Hunt

Old news stories never die;
they just go on overset . . .
and overset . . . and over . . .

Gay Talese, in his now classic *The Kingdom and the Power*, berated the smug, satisfied, and stodgy New York *Times* of the fifties and sixties for lackluster, habitual coverage of annual news stories such as the Easter parade, the lighting of the Christmas tree in Rockefeller Center, and the governor's budget message: "... any particular occasion that had been successfully and uncontroversially covered and printed in *The Times* last year and the year before, and the year before *that* could be [and usually *would* be] covered the same way this year. The layout would be identical, with the same size photographs and poses and an almost identical headline and lead . . ."



Ah, yes, American journalism's hardy perennials. All papers propagate them, not just the *Times*. What Talese failed to acknowledge was this: we newspaper freaks *love* and *adore* those hardy perennials. Without them we'd feel cast adrift—loosed from our moorings by the editors we depend upon for what little continuity there is upon the storm-tossed sea of current events.

So all hail the Golden Oldies of newspaperdom. Here, in case you haven't kept up, are the current top ten:

1. THE LOCH NESS MONSTER

Bless his fifty-pound, warm-blooded heart, this elusive beast remains the all-time headline-grabbing champion. Oh, sure, the Abominable Snowman horned in for a while, and UFOs caused repeated stirs throughout the 1960s. But year in, year out, Big Nessie continues to add clippings to his scrapbook.

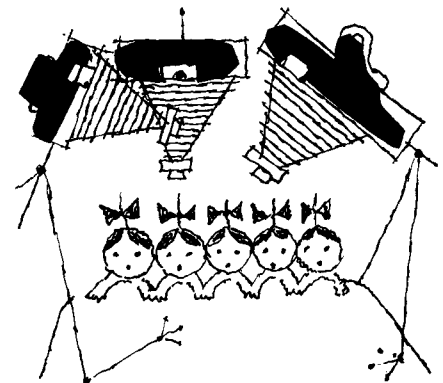
The latest round of stories concerns the attempt of chemists employed by International Flavors and Chemists, Incorporated, of New York to concoct a blend of "attractants" which will lure the monster from the deeps—presumably sexual odors. We've come a long way from mere "sightings" and theories.

How many newspapermen, heavy drinkers notwithstanding, believe there really *is* a Loch Ness monster? Probably not more than 5 percent, for journalists are a skeptical lot. But how many of them would dare *not* print the next fish story to come over the wires with an Inverness dateline? Though it be myth, conventional news judgment dictates that it is a *mandatory* myth.

2. THE DIONNE QUINTUPLETS

The standard Dionne quintuplet story leads with this routinely updated sentence: The three remaining Dionne quintuplets celebrated their XXth birthday today at a quiet party attended by a few close friends.

The remainder of the story (one paragraph, five, ten, twenty, an entire



inside page, how much space do we have to fill?) reminds us what Papa Dionne said when the nurse told him "Five daughters, five!" and how much the family was paid by the Brown & Bigelow Company to pose for the annual advertising calendar pictures and what the girls wore and ate and said on their first trip to the United States and which one went into a convent and came out again and which one died first and which one died second and how the experiences split up the family but not the girls and which of the quints was the jolly one and which was the somber one and also a little bit about the not-anywhere-so-famous Argentine quints, and the certainly-not-so-famous South Dakota quints and if there is room perhaps just a little about how fertility drugs now make

women in Sweden and Australia have seven or nine babies, most of which don't survive.

3. HARRY TRUMAN'S BIRTHDAY-ANNIVERSARY-ANNUAL CHECKUP

This is something of a floating category: Harry Truman took it over only after John Nance Garner died, and Garner replaced Alvin York. Sergeant York, if you remember the Gary Cooper classic, was jes' a hell-raisin' country boy who turned his onriness on the Germans and won every medal the country offers. After the war, he came home, drank a lot, and started dying. Whole generations came to know Sergeant York through the one-inch item at the bottom of page one saying he "lies near death." Occasionally there was a short item saying he "showed signs of recovery," but usually he just went on dying under what editors refer to as a 1-14 machine caps head, which is one size larger than the head over a filler telling us that sisal hemp production has doubled in the Yucatán Peninsula. When York finally did pass away, former Vice President Garner inherited his 1-14 machine caps head. Now Harry Truman has it, and he's always in the news. Does he have ten birthdays a year, or does it only seem so? Does he go in for his annual physical exam every other Tuesday? While we are asking impertinent questions, who will be the next to inherit the old 1-14? Rose Kennedy? J. Paul Getty? Mamie Eisenhower? Lassie?



4. CONSTRUCTION COMES TO A HALT UNTIL ROBINS HATCH

Most newspapers now refuse to send a photographer out to take one of those phony pictures of somebody

presenting somebody else with an oversized check representing first prize in a lottery or the amount of money collected by the United Fund. But they still scramble for a shot of the burly Caterpillar operator scratching his head and looking at a mother robin who stupidly stuffed broomstraws into a crevice between an I-beam and the brick facing, thinking it a suitable place to raise her brood. What kind of sappy sentimentality drives a contractor to lose hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost time over a clutch of eggs? Especially after his heavy equipment and his endless blasting have destroyed the runs and burrows of dozens upon dozens of fuzzy little rabbits and beguiling gophers? Does this sort of folly sell papers? Probably not. Does it somehow balance all the bad news out of Saigon, Moscow, Washington, and Wall Street? Maybe.

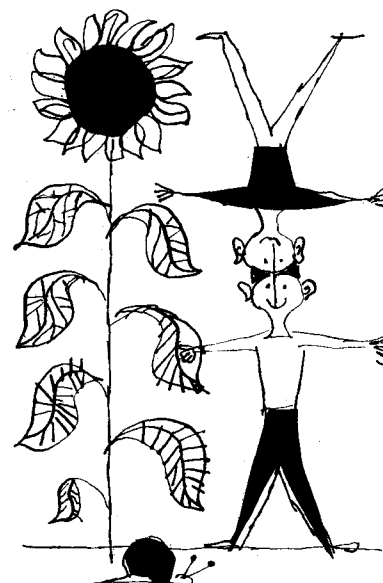
5. THE TEMPERATURE IN INTERNATIONAL FALLS, MINNESOTA

Duluth calls itself "the air-conditioned city," and Bemidji, Minnesota, proudly boosts its image as "the nation's icebox." Presidio, Texas, on the other hand, usually has its first 100-plus day of the year a week or so after the last 100-plus day of the previous year. Still, International Falls retains its mystique. Why do people live where it gets down to 50 below in the winter? How do they start their cars? Apparently these questions, although they have been answered in numerous oil company commercials and Harry Reasoner interviews, continue to fascinate the American public. Or is it just that we need reassurance every February 2 that there are people in the world who are crazier and more uncomfortable than we?

6. GARDEN ODDITY: A POTATO SHAPED LIKE A DUCK

Actually, there hasn't been a picture of a potato shaped like a duck in an American newspaper for seven years, and then only because it was grown by the wife of the publisher of a 1400-circulation weekly in Vermont. But the parade of garden oddities continues unabated: A sunflower as tall as one teen-age boy standing

on the shoulders of another. A zucchini squash that grew around a brick. A tomato that looks like Jimmy Durante if you look at it this way, a goose if you look at it that way. Similarly, a gourd that bears a striking resemblance to Abraham Lincoln. A Siamese twin cabbage. A carrot growing in a crack in the sidewalk. Cauliflower in a second-story gutter spout. The law of averages, assisted perhaps by bored or imaginative gardeners, dictates that each year at least one zucchini squash will grow around a brick and somehow one cauliflower



seed will find its way to a second-story gutter spout. News of the event is assurance that the long, hot summer is drawing to a close, and perhaps that is a worthwhile public service.

7. ANOTHER CABINET SHUFFLE IN ITALY

Take a dozen playing cards. How many ways can you rearrange them in your hand? How many combinations are there? How long does it amuse you? What difference does it make? Now substitute slips of paper marked Fanfani, Rumor, Nenni, Moro, etc. Start moving the cards around again. After each shuffle, write a dispatch to the wire services. Other countries have tried this system (France after the war; South Vietnam after Diem; The Congo after Inde-



pendence, etc.), but the Italians are the only ones who know how to make it work as an acceptable alternative to a functioning government. If you continue to read these stories beyond the headline, perhaps you should be subscribing to *Mad* magazine instead of a daily newspaper.

8. IF THIS IS JANUARY, IT MUST BE PIE CHART TIME

The National Football League has managed in six short years to Pavlov us into associating mid-January with Super Bowl. Rah. But not all the Howard Cosell interviews in the world can equal the excitement in newsrooms across the nation each January when the Associated Press wirephoto machine transmits the Proposed Annual Budget pie charts: artistic renderings of two outsized silver dollars, one showing where the money goes, the other depicting where the money comes from. Amazing: every year the Defense slice of the Outgo pie makes like The Blob that menaced Steve McQueen, blurp-



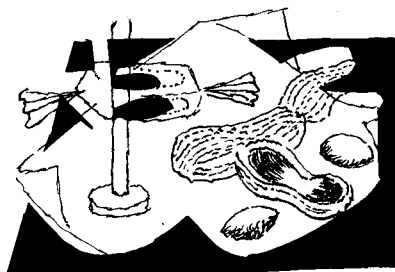
ing and gloomping itself 10 percent bigger. And all those other slices—welfare, education, health, and such—have shrunk so much that their legends have to be printed outside the pie chart, connected to it by skinny lines. The average reader spends 17.3 seconds staring at the pie charts, never really fully comprehending. It beats reading the 650-page book on which they're based, though, and that's what keeps enterprises like the AP, the *Reader's Digest*, and Classic Comics in business.

9. TWO FRATERNITY BOYS TOSS FRISBEE FOR 37 DAYS

Fraternity boy kisses coed for eleven hours. Fraternity boy takes shower for three days. Fraternity boys demolish grand piano and stuff the pieces through 10-inch hole in 27 seconds flat. Seventeen fraternity boys in a phone booth. Twenty-two fraternity boys in a Volkswagen. Fraternity boy sits atop Old Main cupola until campus raises ten thousand dollars for multiple sclerosis. Fraternity boy pushes peanut with nose to girls' college eight miles away. Fraternity boy holds ice cube for 38 minutes before it melts completely. Fraternity boy stays up 188 hours without falling asleep. Fraternity boy eats 71 hot dogs in one sitting. Fraternity boy pushes bed across United States. Fraternity boy skips rope for entire semester. Fraternity boy walks up and down steps of Washington Monument 23 times in a row. Fraternity boy floats down Mississippi in bathtub. Fraternity boy gets picture in all 1700 U.S. daily newspapers.

10. ENTERPRISE STORY: WHAT CAN YOU BUY FOR A PENNY?

Contrary to what you might think from reading the typical American newspaper, every day is not replete with rapes, natural disasters, city hall graft, society scandals, National Safety Council highway slaughter predictions, and the preceding nine archetypes. Occasionally the Great God of Black Ink and Pulp Newsprint conspires mightily against the journalist. When this happens, it is called a Slow News Day. Does that mean the paper shrinks by some multiple of four pages? Of course not. It means that the editors, who usually content themselves with stripping the wire machines for copy and ripping open basketloads of handouts prepared by public relations men, must resort to what is known in the trade as the "enterprise" story—which means they get a little dandruff under their fingernails from scratching their heads. What usually results is a particularly cute little feature written by the most eager kid in the general as-



signment pool. "Here's ten cents," growls the green-eyeshade man. "Go out and see how many things you can buy in this town for a penny." The kid buys a piece of candy, a nail, a handful of stale peanuts, and returns with seven cents to produce an outpouring of sparkling copy that just about fills the inside front page if the photo chief blows his nail-candy-nuts picture up to four columns by eight inches deep.

Sad to say, some editors are coping out these days . . . sending the cubs out to see what they can buy for a *nickel*. What the hell, don't they have any respect for a tradition? If they start tampering with the Ten Hardy Perennials, by damn, the fading American newspaper's glory days are truly numbered. □

THERE COMES AFTER HERE

A story by Denis Johnson

Jamie had been going to kill herself as that was the only way to show him, but Sarah Hughes two trailers down had killed herself first to show her own husband—cleaned the trailer, dressed up in her special black negligee, and stood right in the doorway when she shot herself with her husband's police revolver, so she was the first thing he found when he came home late from running around on her, stretched out on the floor like a dark Raggedy Ann doll with her brains in the kitchen. Two weeks later he was living in the same trailer with the girl Sarah had killed herself over. Sarah had always been the one to do things first that way, giving herself to the state wrestling champion when she was only fourteen, and then the other girls all saw what a mistake it was and decided to wait till they were almost married. So Jamie left him standing in the little kitchen with half a grapefruit in his hand instead.

Anyway, now they were in Illinois, and the bus would stop in Chicago, where they had to change. Miranda jabbered on and on, excited to be up past bedtime. Jamie pushed the words away, afraid of the dark the bus rushed into, confused at being swallowed so quickly by her new existence, fearful she would be gulped down whole and digested and spit out an old lady at the other end, too jumbled to wonder where her youth had disappeared to. Occasionally she tried to shush Miranda, as the baby was sleeping and so was everyone else on the bus, except the driver, she hoped, but Miranda had to nudge Baby Ellen with her foot every two seconds because she wanted to play, right in the middle of Illinois in the middle of the night. "Randy," she said, "I'm tarred now, hon. Don't wake up Ellen now."

Miranda sat on her hands and pretended to sleep, secretly nudging Baby Ellen with her foot.

"Move your foot, hon," Jamie told her. "I ain't playing, move your foot now."

Miranda feigned sleep, unable to hear, her foot jerking in a dream to jostle the baby.

"Move—yer—*fut*," Jamie whispered fiercely and grabbed her ankle and moved it. "You behave. Or I'll tell the driver and he'll take and put you off the bus, right there in that cornfield. Right in the dark, with the scarecrow. Do you hear me?" She jerked Miranda's foot away again. "Don't you play like you're asleep when I can see goddamn it you ain't!"

She stared with hatred at Miranda's closed eyes and soon realized the child had fallen asleep. The weight of anger was displaced by the weight of fear as the bus sailed down the gullet the headlights made. She put her hand over her face and half-slept.

In Chicago all the people were dwarfs and they pushed and shoved to get on the bus, even cutting in front of the two kindly nuns, who were there first. The two nuns smiled sweetly at Miranda and Baby Ellen and played peekaboo behind their fingers after they had taken their seats; but Jamie could tell they found her makeup too thick, her skirt too brief. They knew she was leaving her husband and figured she would turn for a living to whoring. She wanted to tell them what was what, but you can't talk to a Catholic. The shorter nun carried a bright cut rose wrapped in her two hands.

A colored man came on the bus holding up his pillows for fifty cents like a skilled waiter. Jamie bought two pillows and placed one under Miranda's head, smoothing back the child's hair and crooning to her softly.

"Momma, Momma I ain't tarred in the least just now," Miranda said, hooking back a strand of hair with her pinky. "Where are we, Momma?"

"We're under the ground, sugar. We're in Chicago like I told you, and the bus station is under the ground. See all the pretty blue lights? All over?"

As the bus wound through the tunnel toward the surface among blue lights the passengers were thrown back and forth like dummies propped in their seats. Once in a movie the Comanches had scalped the cavalry scouts and sent them, bloody under their hats, back into the cavalry fort propped up dead in their saddles. "We're going to Chocklit Town," Miranda said.

They came up into the street and the bus appeared too large to maneuver safely among the blustering little cars. "Howcomes they need all those blue lights, Momma?" Miranda said. She stood in her seat and peered over to see what was behind her.

"Oh I don't know, Randy," Jamie said, and began to weep uncontrollably, her shoulders pitching and jerking in a rhythm unlike the bus's.

"We're going someplace," Miranda informed the man in the seat behind them. "Want to know where we're going?" Jamie pressed her forehead against the windowpane, her knuckles jammed against her teeth. The man in the seat behind was nearly asleep but with the motion of the bus he seemed to nod at Miranda. "Chocklit Town," she told him. "Hershey, Pennsylvania, with everything chocklit." Holding back sobs that jumped out of her anyway, Jamie seemed to be upchucking rather than weeping, her face sickly and swollen under the passing streetlights. "Chocklit houses and chocklit streets and chocklit people," Miranda said, leaning further over the back of the seat to ensure the man's attention. "You could eat chocklit all day if you want to. Momma's going to *make* the chocklit." Jamie was talking and sobbing into her pillow, crushing herself to it to contain her shuddering.

"Ka-hack, ka-hack, ka-haaaa," Baby Ellen screamed. She swung her fists outward from the infant seat and stretched her legs and kicked. Her howling arose through the bus, which up to now had been silent save for the chatter of Miranda and her mother's exploding of grief into the pillow.

"Shush, Baby Ellen," Miranda said. She struck the baby across the face. "Chocklit Town you can cry all you want to. Shush! I'm fixing to go to sleep right now." She put her hand on her hip, standing on her knees in the seat. "Can't you all give me one single minute of peace?" She placed her pillow over Baby Ellen's face.

"Miranda, leave her *a-lone*," Jamie said, still sobbing. She unbuckled Baby Ellen from the infant seat between them and held her in one arm and crooned, every now and then her voice catching as if with a hiccup.

With her free hand she searched beneath the seat for the traveling bag, then in the traveling bag for Baby Ellen's orange juice. "There there there there," she told Baby Ellen. "Have a crib for you soon, and a string to tie on your music box with, and Momma

and Miranda'll come sing to you when it's bedtime, and here's your orange juice thank goodness, there there there little Baby Ellen, oh that's a good orange juice, such a serious orange juice, such a serious look, oh, see the pretty sun? See the sun over there, Baby Ellen? That's just a little bitty part of the sun, pretty soon Baby Ellen see the whole sun and then it's morningtime for Baby Ellen and Momma and Miranda Sue."

She fed Baby Ellen her orange juice and watched the sun as it moved into prominence above the dead cornfields in Indiana, the light striking her face painfully as it ticked over the frozen pools and rows of broken stalks glazed with ice. Her husband was an electric salesman with no talent for selling and no feeling for electronics. He brooded over his life, and it grew on him till he was rattling around inside of it and practically went crazy. Why couldn't she just be thankful to him, he always wanted to know, since he was losing track of what *he* wanted just so *she* could have everything *she* wanted? Couldn't she see how everything kept happening? How everything was on top of him, then he was on top of it, looked like, but nothing ever ended out right? It was just, he would pound his fist on the wall so the small trailer shook, *one moment goes to the next* . . . He choked her close to death twice, so frantic to think she could not understand what was happening to him. And she could not. He slept almost every moment he was at home. At night, he cried and confessed how everything scared him. Whenever she looked at him he had his face in his arms, hiding from the pictures in his own brain. He had found himself a girlfriend finally.

Her husband had been no problem with running around at first. He had been just the opposite at first, staying home and sleeping, sleeping. Sarah Hughes's husband had done enough running around for five men. Sarah never knew for sure where it was that her husband was the night security man, so she was never able to check up on him, though she knew what he was up to, she said, because he ate a lot of eggs all the time. The trouble with Jamie's husband, at first, was that he believed happiness lived in one place, California, and all you had to do to find happiness was get yourself a trailer there. California had been Golden Land much like Miranda's Chocolate Town, an exaggeration of a big lie.

She could never pick out the right thing to do from all the other things. Cut loose between California and everything that would happen next; she could not stand to let the bus keep moving, and thought, I will get off this bus at the breakfast stop and change my ticket and take the next bus on home, no matter about Chocolate Town. She had left her confused husband and the dead tragic Sarah behind, but had taken his confusion and her tragedy along. He would be happy to see her, confusion or guilt notwithstanding.

ing, she was certain of it. What would she say? Forgot my toothbrush, she told herself, and smiled. Forgot my purse. Left my lunch behind. The ticket man would laugh at her for turning around right in the middle. Liked the trip so much, you thought you'd start over, said the ticket man. Yep, have to go back and look out the left side this time, case I missed something special, Jamie would say. At the breakfast stop Jamie paid a lady to look after Miranda and Baby Ellen while she took a shower in the ladies' room. Miranda stood on a tomato juice crate to play the pinball and took pictures of herself holding Baby Ellen in a little booth with a curtain. Jamie and Miranda ate cornflakes with sliced banana, and the turnpike took on more curves and hills as it came toward Cleveland.

Four seats back and on the other side of the aisle, the two nuns sat muttering to themselves, sleepy with breakfast. Jamie observed them secretly and realized they were praying, the bright rose the shorter nun had been clutching in Chicago now replaced by a dark rosary. Jamie wondered if nuns were made to pray each day following breakfast. Did they think to themselves, I am praying, and did they hold a portrait in their head of God's face with his white beard, listening and nodding thoughtfully at their Latin? She glanced at Miranda making broad, even strokes with a crayon across the page of a magazine, and wondered if her own little girl would ever be a nun with a black and white hat on top of her curly hair. But then, Miranda was not a Catholic because Jamie was not a Catholic. They had not been much of anything in California, though they had been Baptists in West Virginia before the move. You couldn't be very hot on your religion in California, because California was full of agnostics and John Birchers and magicians, and the only ones very serious about religion were the crazy people like that, who were always jumping off the bridges. In California, Baptism seemed just another way of getting yourself wet.

There were people in California convinced that the world would soon come to an end, or that spacemen would be arriving. You picked Venusians or Martians or Jesus Christ, or people without names from across the galaxy. Sodom and Gomorrah had been destroyed by an atom bomb, dropped from a rocket ship.

Jamie heard low snores issuing from the short nun when she was supposed to be praying. God had heard it all before anyway, and did not bother to wake her. From somewhere the bright rose had appeared again, and she choked it in her two hands as she slept.

The man in the seat behind them, Jamie could tell, had her figured for some kind of party girl. But he was a nice man with a kindly grin and a tattoo of a sea horse on his arm that fascinated Miranda. "King Neptune gave it to me," he told her,

and winked at Jamie, and that was all he would say about his tattoo. As the morning passed, Miranda drew him into her activities, and by the afternoon they were wonderful friends and had already had one fight. He had four beers in his traveling bag and offered one to Jamie, not with grinning and winking and eyebrow flickering, but with gravity, with pomp, as though presenting her with a verse from the Bible or a brand of medicine. For all the pushing and crowding and disrespect for nuns shown in Chicago, the seat beside him, as were several others, was vacant. She accepted his invitation to join him. "I thought you was about to jump clean off the bus there a while ago," he said.

"Oh, that's just nerves," she said. "We been on buses and off buses and between buses five days now almost. Every time I get to sleep I see buses, buses, buses running over me. And I hear the people talking and their talk just comes right into my dreams. Whew!" she said and bent down behind the seat to drink from her beer.

"Whew!" the man said too, and bent down too, now flickering his eyebrows and demonstrating that he could move the tail of the sea horse on his forearm by clenching and unclenching his fist. But he was only joking with her and sprawled back in his seat and said, "Whew!" He jiggled his beer can, popping the metal rapidly in his grip. "I like to give out myself there. I was hitching but I just plain wore out, and now I'm taking the bus." He grinned and ducked his head. "Well, I guess you got eyes to see I'm taking the bus. Going to Pittsburgh."

"Oh, you don't know those two," she said, gesturing with her beer toward the seat in front of them, where now Miranda and Baby Ellen both napped. "It's like to drive anybody half-blind, looking after those two."

The man had dark curly hair not yet actually thin, but preparing to go bald in the front. When he brushed it back, his shirt sleeve rose with the movement to expose a tattoo of a single naked breast, cupped in two disembodied hands, on his triceps. "I bet your name is Sue," he said.

"Nope. Name's Jamie." She looked in the rear-vision mirror at the driver, wondering if he had noticed the obscene tattoo on the upper arm of the man she was suddenly sharing a seat with. The driver's eyes were fixed on the road.

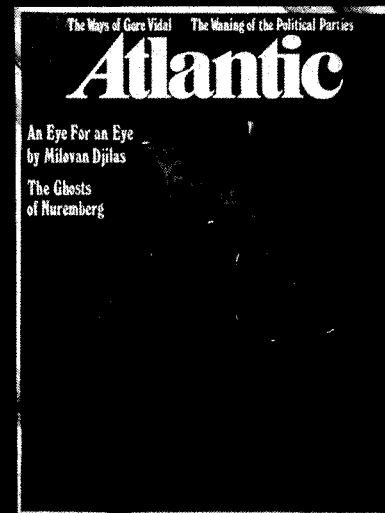
The man's eyes were fixed on Jamie. "Oh, he don't see, Jamie," he said. He gulped from his beer without bending to conceal the action. "Nope. He-don't see. Whew!"

"How do you know?"

"I been a bus driver. All's you can see is if somebody's in a seat or they ain't. You can't tell if they're drinking beer or pop, or if they're asleep or awake or what they're doing."

"Oh," she said. They observed the power lines as they dipped and rose and ran by over the phone poles, the rows in the planted fields, less occasional

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now in Ohio, as they spread out like fans from the horizon, then whipped shut as they passed. The sky had gone gray after dawn, and the hills pushed up directly against the burden of it; a few birds glided and wheeled just under it. "Let the boy rock and roll," she hummed to herself, and the man hummed a melody too, interjecting a hissy whistle into the tune.

"Nope, nope, nope," the man said, popping his beer can. She glanced at him but he did not continue, and she turned her eyes again to the fields running away beside them. "Nope, nobody sees this," he said suddenly, and kissed her cheek.

"Now stop that!"

"Stop what?"

"I'm married!"

"Where's your husband?"

"He's home."

"Where's that?"

"He's home. He's at the next stop. He's in Cincinnati."

"This bus don't go to Cincinnati."

"He'll meet us in Cleveland."

"Now, I heard you telling your little girl, while back, she won't see Daddy no more." He grinned and opened another beer. It hissed loudly opening, and she jerked. No one had noticed. The two nuns were asleep toward the back, one leaning against the windowpane with the other's head resting on her shoulder.

"Well," Jamie said, "I had to leave him."

"You're not going to start howling on me again are you?"

"I told you, that was just nerves. Everybody gets nerves now and again."

"Have another beer, afore I drink it all up."

"You didn't even say your name yet."

"Name's Bill. Leather Bill. Bill Houston. Told it to your little girl there, and I thought you must of heard." He took hold of her hand, rubbing it briskly.

"Don't matter how you rub it," she said. "I ain't fainted yet, long as this trip has lasted. Holding hands is holding hands. And kissing is kissing, even just on the cheek. Now, you behave."

"Oh, all right," he said, mocking her. "I'll leave off. Hey, here, I got something right here that'll help that beer taste goo-ood." He sneaked a pint bottle of bourbon from his bag, and catching hold of her wrist, sloshed some into her can of beer. "That'll perk her up." He slapped his nose with a forefinger, rolling his eyes and allowing his tongue to fall from the corner of his mouth.

She sipped from her drink and they discussed the passage of eras, the transformation of the landscape, the disappearance of the Burma-Shave signs, the impersonality of the turnpikes. Soon the beer was gone and the cans held only bourbon. "You don't have to be afraid of me," Leather Bill said. "I been married three times."

"Three times? What for?" she said.

"I could never figure out what for myself. After the first time I said, next time you want to do that, you just remember. So I got this here." He displayed a scarcely noticeable tattoo on the inside of his elbow, a tiny feminine Satan's face over the motto, Remember Annie. "It didn't do me no good," he said. "Three months later I was right back married again. To a big and fat one. First one was little and skinny, so the next one I made sure she was big and fat, for the variety."

"Variety's important."

"Yes, it is. Variety's important."

"Course, you have to be dependable, too."

"Third one I married was dependable. I could just never figure it, she was so dependable, and then one day right in the middle of everything she says, what was your first wife's name. I says it was Annie; she says, oh yeah, Annie what; and I says, Annie Klein! What you asking me for? Well, she was just wondering. So about five minutes later she wants to know what was my secont wife's name. So course I told her, which it happened to be the same maiden name as *she* had. That why you picked me? she wants to know. What do you mean, I told her, coming up on me all of a sudden with this shit—scuse me—she says, so, I'm wife number three, and Roberts number two, but when it comes to number one, I ain't a thing, and next day she filed. All of a sudden like that. I says, you're number one! you're number one! but she just went on ahead and filed."

"I imagine I'll be having a divorce pretty soon."

"Oh, there ain't nothing to it. You just stand there, and everything they say, you say yes. Pretty soon you're divorced. It don't feel no different, far as I could tell."

"I think it might probly feel different," she said.

"I don't know," he said. "Never felt a bit different to me. Course, pretty soon, being married was the difference, and getting divorced was the usual."

"That ain't going to be the way with me. I'm single from here on in."

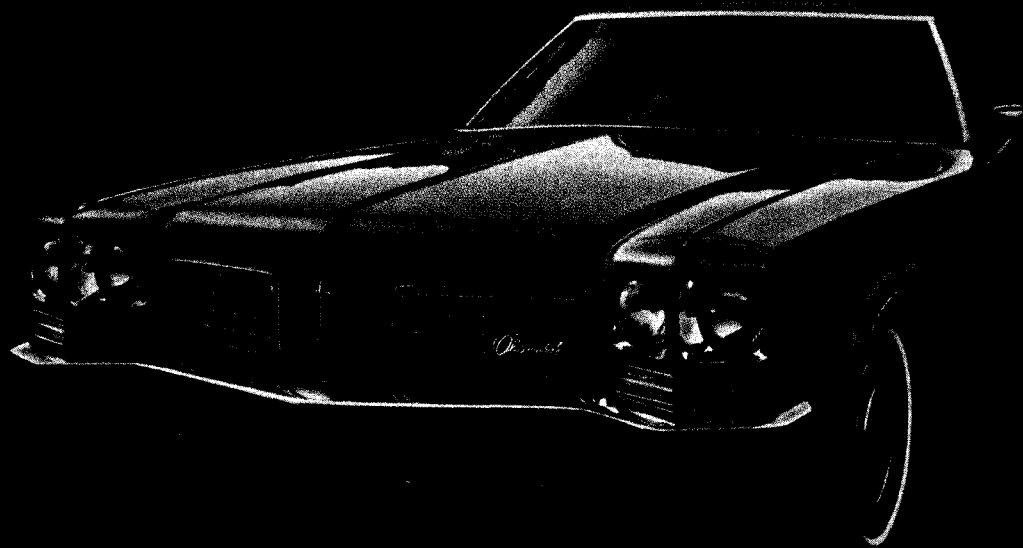
"You just keep saying that, like I did."

"You just watch. Once is enough. I had a man running around on me once, that's all, that's it. No more. Thanks anyway."

"Well. Takes a lot of willpower, stick to one brand all the time with no variety."

"I stuck with the same brand! Wasn't no trouble to *me*. He only had to stay out three nights, and I said that's that. Three times is just about three times too many, I told him. Wasn't long afore I found out who it was, and how many times, and everything. I told him, I'm hard to fool. And I am." She was drunk.

Leather Bill had been working someplace for the last few months, he said. He had had something to do with oil rigging, she was not paying much attention. He had saved up some money, perhaps a good pile of money, and he was lonesome. Cleveland went by like a collection of billboards. Before she knew it she had agreed to stay over a day in Pitts-



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burgh and see the town with Bill Houston before traveling on to Hershey. But didn't Hershey come before Pittsburgh? Or didn't the place they were supposed to change for Hershey come first? He did not know. She did not know, either, and by God she didn't care. She'd been on this bus five days and didn't care, couldn't care. Let her sister-in-law wait all day and all night at the bus station, let Hershey, Pennsylvania, wait one more day for her, she'd been waiting five days for Hershey, Pennsylvania.

She had discussed killing herself, she confessed, with Sarah Hughes, her best friend who had gone to the same high school in West Virginia. Discussed how she would do it. She would dress up, that's how. Wouldn't that show him what he was losing? And she was pretty, wasn't she, even after two kids, and five days on the bus? She would use Sarah's husband's revolver, and stand right in the doorway when she did it, so he would see her first thing. And Sarah would listen in the night for the shot, then listen in case the kids woke up. Because he had stayed out two nights in a row already. That was that, that was all, so long. No thanks, the note would read.

But you know who he was doing it with, Bill? You want to know who? Sarah. Old Sarah from the same homeroom six years ago, same graduation, same trailer court in California, and now same lover, same everything, Sarah Hughes. Because on the third night, she couldn't stand this treatment, not for one more second; she snuck over to Sarah's to borrow the gun and there he was, sneaking home, out of Sarah's trailer with the door creaking so loud in the quiet she took it for herself, screeching, old Leather Bill, and he saw, and she saw, and Sarah in the doorway with her panties saw so everyone knew that everyone else knew what was what with who. The sun was rising. It should have been night, Bill, and it practically was, it felt like night for the three of them. So she left. What could anybody say? Just had to pack and not look at each other and be very quiet, even though Sarah came to knock on the door but went away before she could make herself, twice, and then at nine thirty she killed herself and it was like she killed all three of them. Everyone on the bus was observing her as she

wept on Leather Bill's obscenely tattooed shoulder.

She went to the toilet to vomit. Briefly she attempted to be graceful, then she blundered from one pair of seats to the next, commenting angrily on the erratic and inconsiderate driving around here. Wasn't that the way? Never a bus driver who knows where the road even is. Three feet from the door of the toilet she declared that she had changed her mind and would vomit wherever she felt like it, and watch out because she probably would, any second now. Right now she would see if she wanted to walk a bit more, or vomit first. She would walk up and down the aisle here for a minute, to take the air and cry for a minute.

And goddamn it, didn't she have a right to cry with the kids driving her crazy with Chocklit Town five days on the bus the windows like a movie going by the shoving around? You can give her permission to cry or just go on back to your convent with your rose in your teeth. I'll puke here if I want to or anywhere I want to, your convent Chocklit Town Golden Land. Keep smiling but I can see what you think, the goddamn white line goes right through me every time I close my eyes five days on the bus. Smile. I can see you got to make yourself smile and smile with your convent funny hat, everybody sees you getting angry just like anybody else nun or no nun. Five days on this smelly bus how long you been on? Your whole life is a bus your convent is a bus you do it with the janitors and preachers I've read all about you in the medical articles in the paper. You think I got problems? You got more problems figuring out what to do with that rose than I got in my whole life. I been to your Chocklit Town everybody there just strangles with the stink of it, I been to Golden Land so golden you got to hide from the sun. Pride goeth before, I know pride goeth before a fall, don't you tell me. Well child you. Don't you well child me because I ain't your kid. Pride goeth before a fall, all I need is wings Lord I could go with my pride and no one ever have a thing to say about it, specially nuns. She looked up and she was a woman sailing toward Pittsburgh on the bus, drunk, making a commotion like she never had in her life before. □

THE RETURN by Tu Fu

*Translated by Mark Perlberg
and Lee Feigon*

Late at night I return home along Tiger Road.
The mountains are black, the people sunk in their sleep.
At the horizon the Dipper descends into the river.
Above, the morning star blossoms in space.
In front of my house I call for a pair of torches.
The flare startles an ape in the mountain pass:
"That white-haired dancing old man,
singing and shaking his thorn staff.
At such an hour? Who can he be?"

TWO POEMS

by Jarold Ramsey



IN THE THICKET

"To slay, to love—the greatest enterprises of life upon man!"

—Axel Heyst, *Victory*

We always learn something, love, in a thicket
At home with you now, in the ultimate confusions
Of love and death, death and love, I think
Of the summer I was thirteen: skulking
With an older friend named Harold in a jungle
Of scraggly lodgepole pine and fern and whatnot
Going dark in the dusk by the Pacific,
Bat and locust hour in that slanting limbo
Between the absolutes of sea and mountain forest—

We spied a man in a clearing, with a woman.
Our fright and their lust made them luminous;
We were dumbfounded by all that pale motion on the ground.
He was doing things to or with that woman
We hadn't dreamed of yet. "Should we
Tell my father?" I said to Harold, *sotto voce*.
"No, let's wait and see." What more to see
I never learned, for Harold's callow throat betrayed us,
Cracking up between a whisper and a squeak.

The man reared up, twisting the shadows;
Before our eyes his movement and the woman's,
Faceless, eloquent, swimming over
The dark earth together in circles, straightened, harkened
To us, became a final spasm of recognition
As he grabbed a rifle up and turned and fired,
Snapping off four shots like curses.
Three went wild, the last one lopped a branch off
I held in my hand.

When we stopped running
On the moon-stunned beach in sight of the village
Our wounds were three toenails missing between us,
And my hand was numb to the wrist, as if I'd
Hammered a spike on stone. "What if he'd killed us?"
Asked Harold. In the sand his foot was bleeding the answer.
"Maybe she wasn't his wife," I said,
Indignant in safety, limping toward final causes.

Such naïveté! And yet my hand
Twenty years older grows numb once again when I phrase
For you the question I vowed that night never
To ask my father, for fear of his begging the question:
Was it love somehow
Was it love that wanted us dead in the thicket?

DREAMING OF CANNONS

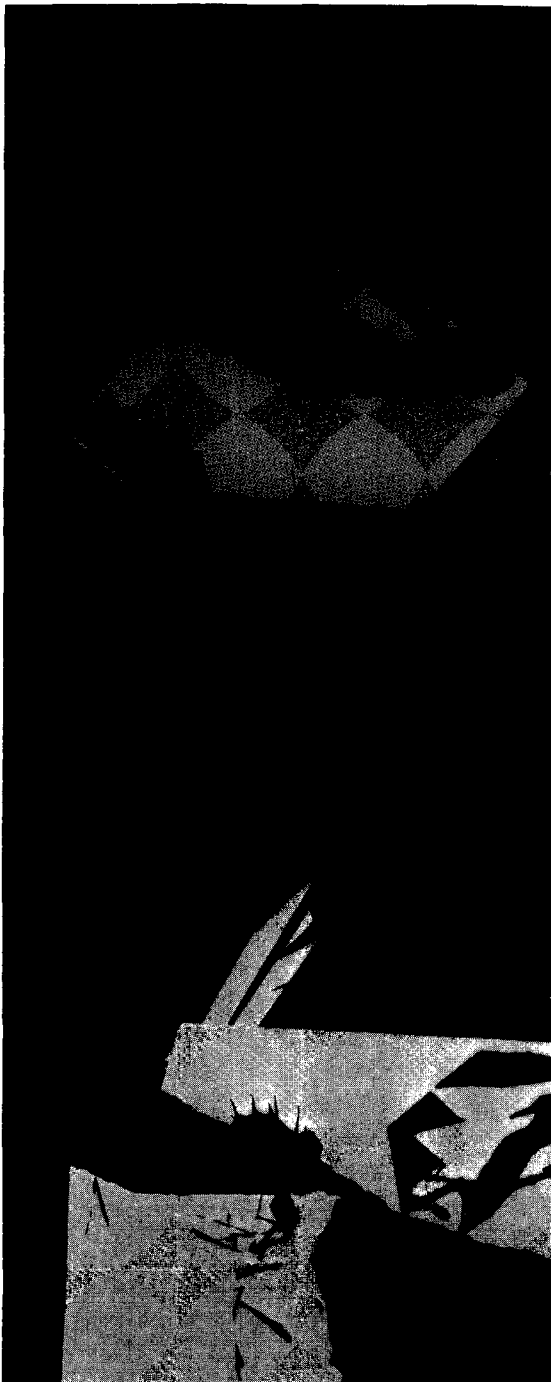
"Before we was mustered out in '66 and went on home to the Valley, we buried our brass cannon near the Camp. We thought old Chief Paulina and his braves might make trouble again sometime, and anyway, that cannon would have been *tolerable* heavy to carry back over the mountains."

—A member of Company A, First Oregon Volunteers, stationed at Camp Polk, Oregon, during Indian uprisings in 1865-1866; as told to Walter Mendenhall, as told to his nephew Max Mendenhall, as told to *his* nephews . . .

Max, your twice-told tale of buried cannons
Has unhinged me, I think of nothing else
These days, so far from home I must believe it.
I close my eyes and there we are, you and I,
Next summer maybe, in a humming meadow
By the boulder-rolling creek the Indians called *Why-chus*
Where those homesick shiftless troopers
Caught their salmon horseback, and plinked
Away at deer and varmints raiding camp.
Their unused marching ground is camouflaged
For good in kinnikinnick and rabbit brush
And somewhere every volunteer lies mustered out
For good or bad. Now Indians die in cities.

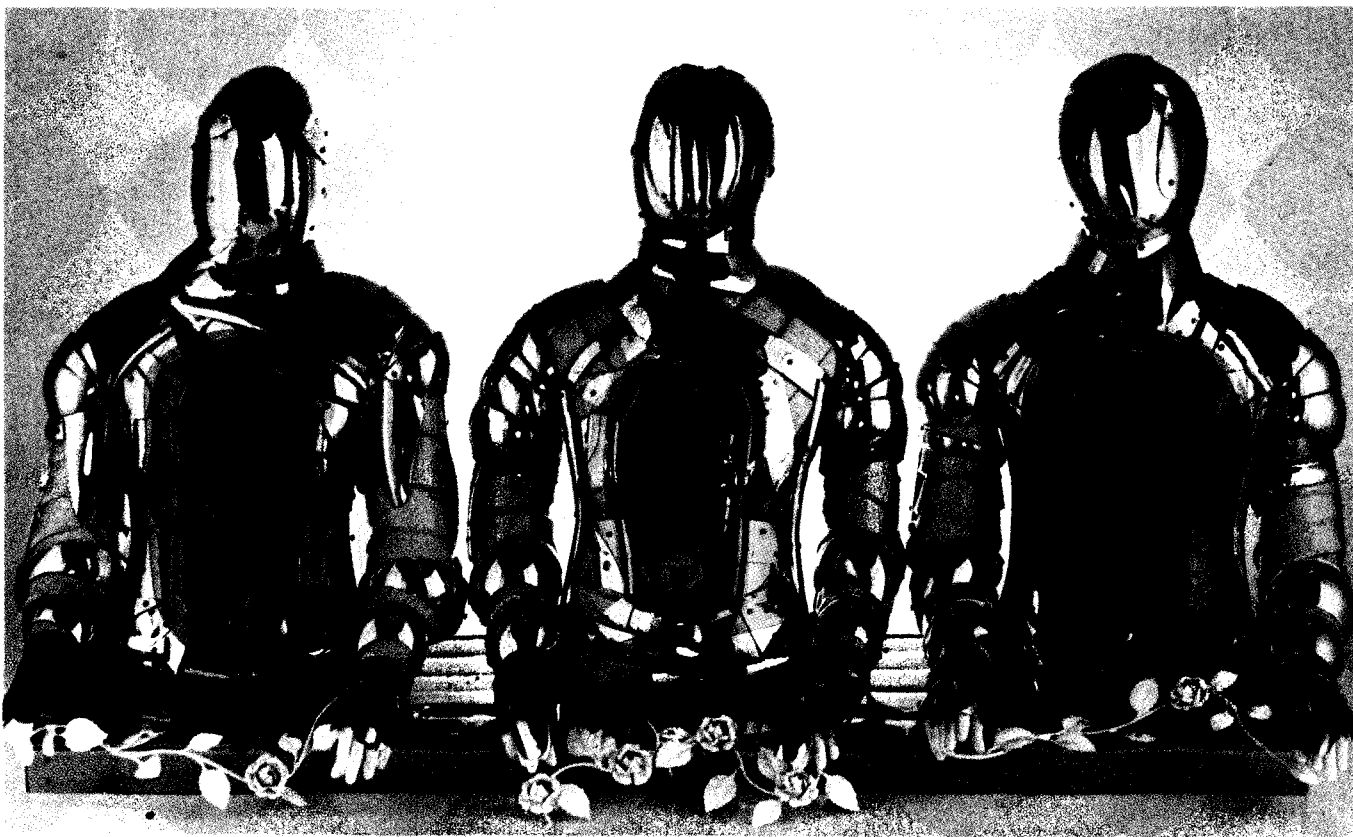
But Max, can you imagine it—
In the loam beneath this turf and pine duff
Blind breech and muzzle, long as you,
A cannon lies aimed at everything!
My mind burns towards the touchhole like a fuse:
Cast in Philadelphia instead of bells,
Georgia oak the wheels that hearsed it here,
Now they rot in Oregon, while the patient roots
Keep fumbling, prying at the barrel
Colder than the stones beside *Why-chus*.
Like nothing else beneath this meadow
It does not turn again to earth.
Darkly spin the years along its burnished bore.

Now then Max, we dig, you there, I here.
Black loam turns gray in the sun like gunpowder,
Crumbling bones and ash and flakes of charcoal
Explode and sift beside the deepening crater,
And soon our shovels clang like bells, sunlight
Roundly glints on brass, and Max I see us fall
And kneel like infidels beside our brazen god:
Unearthed, untimed, the cannon gapes and blooms.



INTERPRETATIONS.

No. 1 in a series based on FTD's Commemorative Art Collection.



The Men of Space...An Artist's Tribute

Paul Van Hoeydonck, 1971



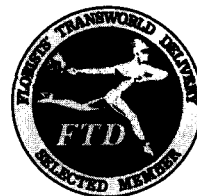
"The entering of man into space must be placed on a level above all prejudice of color of skin, nationality or political belief. There is no future for man without the acceptance of our entering the space age. Earth has become planet Earth, space is our final destination, answers will come from the stars. The new man is born.

The work, titled 'Memorial to Fallen Spacemen', is a salute to the men who have given their lives in the pursuit of space and the solving of its secrets. I made their faces anonymous as they stand for all of us.

I like to use flowers in my works. In this case, what could have been more appropriate than to express my grief and respect by using flowers. They are like symbols of our mysterious yearning to make nature participate in our emotions. By loving flowers, we become one with nature. This is why I opened the spacemen's chests to show roses growing inside their bodies."

Paul Van Hoeydonck.

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LIFE & LETTERS

THE MAN WHO WOULD BE HERO

by Josiah Bunting III

THE PATTON PAPERS, 1885-1940
by Martin Blumenson
Houghton Mifflin, \$15.00

For many it is difficult to acknowledge authentic military genius—and there is such a thing—without a patronizing smile. The very existence of brilliant generals seems an unacceptable reminder of our failures to stop hating and fighting one another. The political systems and ambitions of nations in which men esteemed the profession of arms their highest calling are now largely despised or discredited. Moreover, we have been fighting a war for seven years which has disclosed no apparent prodigies of generalship on our side except perhaps the dour pertinacity, reminiscent of U.S. Grant's, of the current commander in Vietnam. Yet forgetting almost everything about the nature of our present war, men continue to reassure themselves that a really first-class soldier (say, Moshe Dayan), a man of vision and flair, might have cleaned things up in a hurry.

It is not likely. But for a country conditioned by its experience in World War II to expect inspired generalship and innovative tactical and strategic thinking in its army, such an idea is not so unreasonable. For this country produced in the early 1940s a galaxy of gifted and brilliantly successful generals. They “went forward and gave us victory,” they did it with palpable speed, and their cause was just.

Among them four stood out. And of these four there are two whom

most of us can admire without reservation, because we see in them what we hope are our own virtues and convictions magnified and triumphant.

There is, first, Eisenhower, at whom many of the academic cognoscenti now sneer. He seems, like Emerson's Lincoln, a quite native, aboriginal man: a soldier in whom decency and compassion were lodged alongside enormous managerial talents and great personal charm. No hangups, no poses, just Ike: a great general who had no trouble telling Walter Cronkite that when he thought later of the Normandy invasion he thought of his son, John, who was at West Point and was spared the horror, who had blessed him with grandchildren, “whom Mrs. Eisenhower and I love very much.” He was a great and simple man.

The second is George Marshall, whom Eisenhower rated (with Churchill) as one of the two greatest men of the age, a soldier who would become a Nobel Peace laureate, “whose very goodness seemed to put ambition out of countenance,” who, Truman believed, more than anyone else “gave us victory.” Marshall was a remote figure. He was a man utterly without pretension. His reputation for integrity was so great that he could argue for large military appropriations and preparedness before we entered the war and still convince people that he truly wanted peace. Not many soldiers can do that.

The sociologist Morris Janowitz once called the history of the modern military establishment a “struggle be-

tween heroic leaders, who embody traditionalism and glory, and military ‘managers’ who are concerned with the scientific and rational conduct of war.” The former are “perpetuations of the warrior type, the mounted officer who embodies the martial spirit and the theme of personal valor,” while the managers are “professionals with effective links to civilian society.” It is easy to place Marshall and Eisenhower in the “managerial” category. The other two, MacArthur and Patton, are clearly “heroic leaders.” If the managers are generally regarded as “safe” soldiers, direct projections of the civilian mores they represent and defend, the heroic leaders are men who seem to enjoy their business, revel in its challenges, and accept, unblushing, credit for their armies’ military successes.

MacArthur was a military genius, certainly: the most gifted uniformed strategist the country has produced since Sherman and Grant. He was also frightening: a man without self-doubt, distant and Prussian in bearing, magisterial and compelling in utterance. He had no common touch, knew it, and did not care. As his *Memoirs* clearly show, he was totally an egotist. Like George Patton he inspired either absolute loyalty or complete repugnance.

But of the four the last was the most complex and surely the least understood. The superb film, a work of high kitsch, addressed but two years of Patton's life; it had to leave unanswered the intriguing question of how its subject became what the public

April Report on

Atlantic Monthly Press books



For upwards of two years, the *Atlantic's* Contributing Editor **ROSS TERRILL** had been trying to get a visa to enter China; and when, last spring, the Chinese finally consented, both Terrill and the *Atlantic's* editors jumped at the chance. Terrill, a research fellow in Chinese affairs at Harvard's East Asian Center, had visited China in 1964 and was eminently qualified to observe post-Cultural Revolution China at firsthand.

On returning from China, Terrill wrote two long articles, whose quality and insight regular readers of the *Atlantic* have had a chance to judge for themselves. But, a general magazine must necessarily limit the space which it can devote to a single subject or writer. And when it became clear that the material Terrill had collected was, quite literally, enough to fill a book, we eagerly encouraged him to expand his articles to book length. The result is **800,000,000: THE REAL CHINA.**

Followers of this column have read our modest boast that the collaboration between the *Atlantic* and the Press produced Joseph Wambaugh's *The New Centurions*, which became one of last year's big best sellers. We are immodestly proud that the same collaboration has now produced a book that is not only required reading for anyone interested in world affairs but a delightful piece of literature as well.

800,000,000: THE REAL CHINA

by **Ross Terrill**

29 Photographs

\$7.95 at your bookstore

LITTLE, BROWN

knew in 1945: a swaggering, bombastic, profane, but above all successful tactician and leader of soldiers. The half-dozen earlier biographies, excluding the excellent, impressionistic memoir *Before the Colors Fade*, by Patton's nephew Frederick Ayer, have passed over his early years quickly, relying on what have become clichés: the self-absorbed child having the *Iliad* read to him, the adolescent on long solitary rides in the desert, the cadet who hated algebra and could cold-bloodedly and without apparent remorse report another caught *in flagrante delicto*.

Now the detailed record of those years is available for anyone who wants to read through it. Martin Blumenson's *The Patton Papers (1885-1940)*, is mainly a collection of previously unpublished journals, notebooks, memos, personal letters, medical and efficiency reports, and professional writings from Patton's life down to the end of the interwar years.

Blumenson's is a superb job of editing: calm and informative connecting passages, tight summaries of Patton's often turgid writings, intelligent hypotheses about what made "Georgie" run. Patton is made to tell his own story, and anyone who reads it should be warned at the outset that he'd better read it through. Much of the collected writing will serve only to reinforce the familiar public image. But some of it tells a very different story of Patton's character and development. It makes plain the fact that Patton, even in his diaries or in his letters to his wife, was trying desperately to fill a role he had selected for himself as an adolescent, was trying by one attempt at self-conviction after another to make himself fit that role.

Essentially, it was a simple one. It demanded above all that he stand out among his contemporaries, and that a reputation for physical courage and an unassailable devotion to the military profession be the vehicle for gaining distinction. Patton's social connections and family money were only of marginal use in developing such a reputation. They could help put him in a position where such qualities would stand out; they could also expose him to criticism and censure if these qualities were absent.

Winning was what counted: "You have done your damdest and failed now you must do your damdest and

win. Remember this is what you live for. Oh you must! You have got to do some thing! Never stop until you have gained the top or a grave." Repeated academic setbacks in early life only served to reinforce a natural calling for soldiering; for, Patton recognized, success in the profession of arms came as a result of developing talents which no academic test could measure: it was the result of courage and perseverance, physical stamina, the unswerving commitment to a role, and a deep and comprehensive knowledge of the theory, history, and practice of war.

By the time he reached West Point he appears almost to have succeeded in convincing himself that war "is really a very beautiful intellectual contest: the butcher's bill part so to speak is to war what the physical exertion of using a hammer is to the sculptor; besides just think that in all the thousands of years during which man has been killing there are just seven men who ever have risen above vulgar murder . . . who have raised themselves to a place far above the heads of any other men that have ever lived." (Patton was thinking of Napoleon's Seven Great Captains, whose transcendent ambitions and vision seemed to him to have legitimized their killing.) By 1926, when Patton was forty-one, the man and the role were getting closer to identification: "the history of war is the history of warriors: few in number, mighty in influence. Alexander, not Macedonia conquered the world. . . . Cromwell, not the roundheads dethroned Charles. . . . Truly in war: 'Men are nothing, a man is everything' . . . the leader must be an actor . . . he is unconvincing unless he lives his part . . . the fixed determination to acquire the warrior soul and having acquired it to conquer or perish with honor is the secret of victory." (Provision was prudently made in advance for the biographer and the critic quailing at such thoughts: ". . . the historian . . . is by nature a man of thoughtful and studious habits utterly incapable of appreciating the roaring energy of a soldier.")

These were the private reflections of the man for whom soldiers (who are nothing) would happily forgo the pleasures of shoveling shit in Louisiana: Willie and Joe could follow a man who had acquired the warrior soul.

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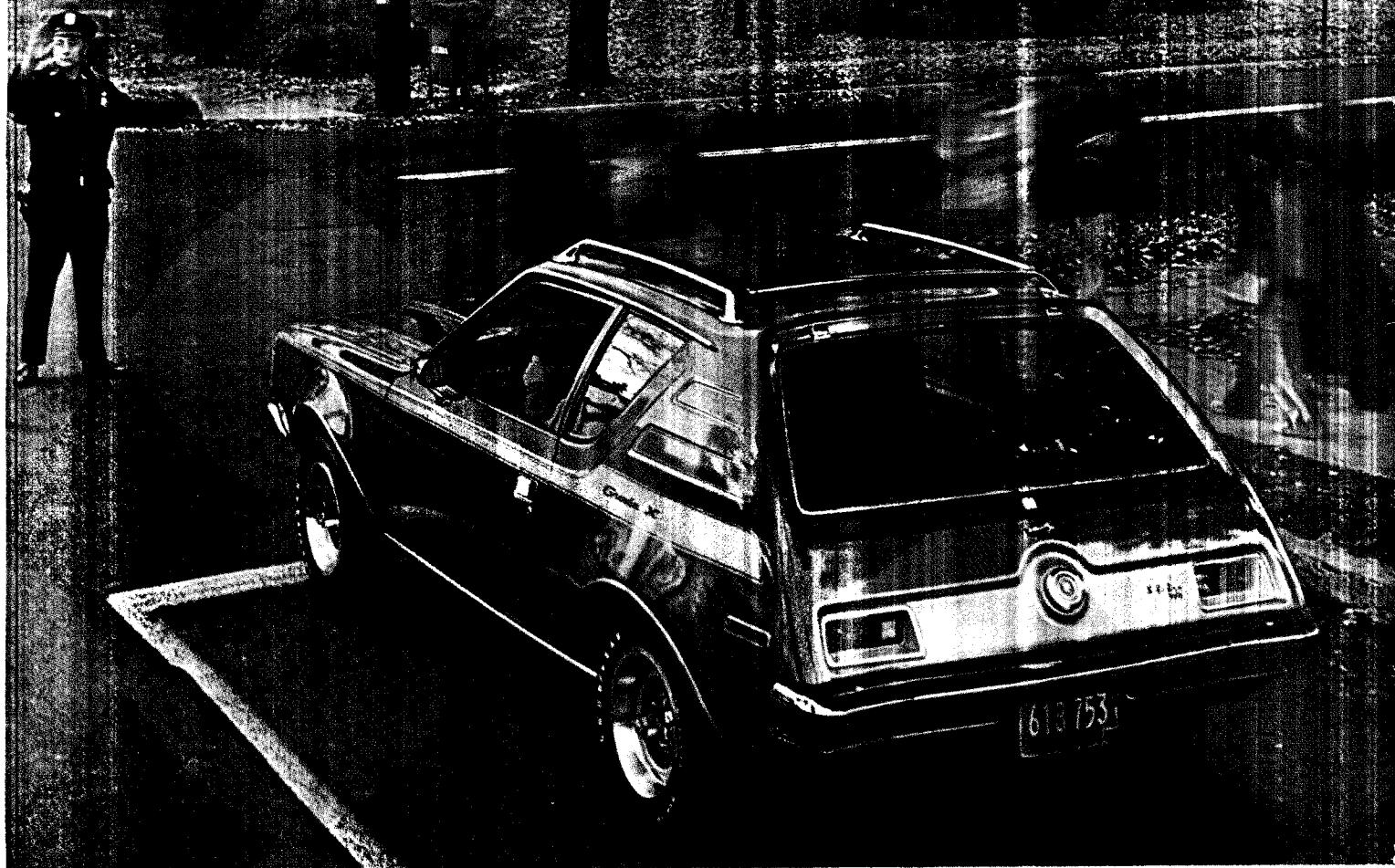
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Or were they serious thoughts? Might they not be the half-formed impulses which it was easier to acknowledge than to analyze and reflect upon? Might they not be part of an unceasing litany sung in solitude and prompted by the desperate hope that if they were repeated enough they would be fully believed? The tone, it seems to me, is too strident, the sentiments repeated too often. And there is much in Patton's later career that contradicts them. The famous slapping incidents in Sicily have made it easy to forget the general's enormous devotion to his soldiers. He spent much more time crying over their wounds and their deaths, seeing to their comforts, than he did screaming at them. His admiration for the ordinary "doughboy" was boundless, his loyalty to his subordinates almost legendary. Before his experience of the battlefield, he might screw himself up into believing that the sweat of the sculptor was a comfortable analogy to the hideous suffering of maimed and dying men. In the 1920s he might write that "men are nothing." But in the combat theater he was more than a bold and attractive general: he was, as Eisenhower's aide Harry Butcher called him, "chickenhearted," by which was meant, of course, that he was a sentimental old bastard.

Yet he was known mainly for other things: for his preoccupation with the outward signs of good discipline: dress and appearance, spit and polish. To most of his soldiers this was a forgivable and amusing idiosyncrasy: the old man was simply a character who had a hangup about shined brass. He was known for saying publicly whatever the hell he felt like saying—often an admirable rather than despicable practice in subordinate commanders: the enemy, after all, knows that the *obiter dicta* of field army commanders do not prescribe national or theater policy. He was known to be wellborn and rich, a polo player and a yachtsman; it was therefore inferred that war must seem a great game to him, and that he was cavalier about its destruction and suffering. It was, and is, a foolish inference. And if it took an assured social position and independent means to undergird public honesty, it is perhaps too bad that more of his "class" (as Patton always referred to his social world) were not generals and po-

litical leaders during the war years.

In the thirties Patton's ebullient but generally sunny public temperament began to change. He became subject to towering rages and ungovernable depressions. Mr. Blumenson hypothesizes that this may have been the result of an ailment called subdural hematoma, stimulated by what Patton grimly called his "annual injuries." The disease is characterized by the formation of a thin layer of blood between the skull and the covering of the brain, which by osmotic pressure draws fluids to it. The result is severe pressure on the brain, leading to irascibility and in Patton's case heightened aggressiveness. Unpleasant though this condition may have been, it might even be said to have come at a fortuitous time. Patton rarely let it get the better of him. And plain aggressiveness combined with a

healthy streak of sentimentalism and brilliant tactical gifts would be no disqualification for command of field armies in World War II.

Presumably another volume of the personal papers will be published in the next few years. Meantime, *The Patton Papers, 1885-1940*, will answer many questions and stimulate new arguments. They should also make it plain that many of the qualities men admire in Eisenhower, in the civilianized "managerial" generals, were part of Patton's character too. He had his doubts about himself, an abiding love for his country and the soldiers it entrusted to his charge, and an engaging sense of the absurd. As he wrote in his diary, he was from an early age well aware that great distinction "like all things which one wants . . . usually becomes dust on the getting."

MOTHER RUSSIA: A TRAIN'S EYE VIEW

by Darrall Beriro

We stand on the station platform of Hoek van Holland, with a gray sea sloshing behind us, snow and rain dribbling from a December night, confronting a train upon which is printed MOSCOW. Two or three other people are planted in the slush further away. We look for a coach with a number that matches the one on our tickets. The windows are as empty as the station. We beat our papers against the glass, and finally we hoist our luggage and worry it into the aisle alone. Our travel rituals are out of focus, and we let a man lock the door behind us and take our papers away. Large, pale, and hairless, in blue work clothes, this kennel-master of "soft" class approves as we push our suitcases along the corridor blazed by a strip of Oriental carpet, past locked doors, to one that is open. "Da," he says, and shuts the door on our intrusion into his world.

Edgar Allan Poe was the author of this room. Walls are snuff-colored, with shallow beams of shellacked khaki. By climbing a metal ladder and snaking on my right shoulder, the top of my head remains out of danger from the ceiling and I can become an elongated human on my Riviera-striped green mattress. I

package the mattress in the uncrushable sheets and a steel-wool blanket, both entirely suitable for conversion to troop movements. The next morning, I will have been buffed red and shiny.

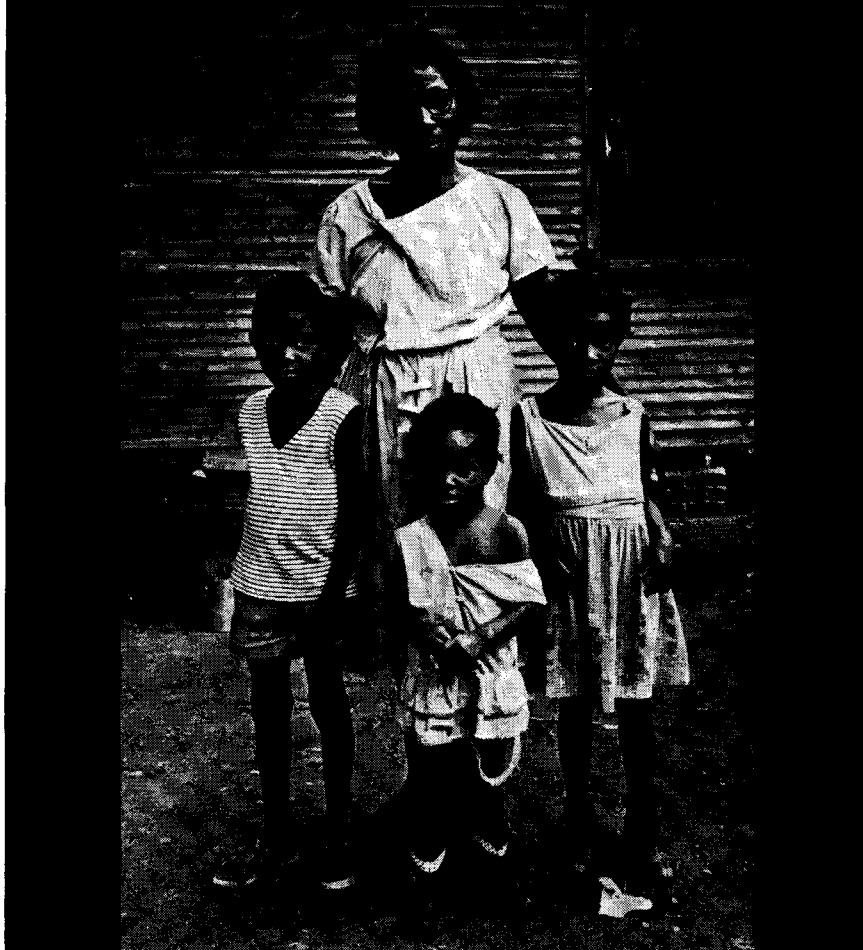
The floors and walls move in place in the endless rattlings of motion. Four or five echo chambers away, blurred voices speak. With all operable lights put out by our overseer, there remains a domed light that yellow-eyes the room, waiting to see me fall from my cliff-bed into the chasm.

It is Monday morning. I measure our casing: six feet by three by eight. There is a sealed window with double glass opposite the door. There is frozen spatter between the two parts. To the right of a basin are three minute lockers with numbers and keyholes. Next door, three women share the same amount of space as we do.

We should have brought food. We were told to, but there is a credibility gap that separates those people who have already been tourists in Russia from everybody else in the world.

The coal-fired samovar at the end of the corridor works. We now have had eight glasses of tea each, and it is still not noon. The silver glass containers are ornate with bunches of

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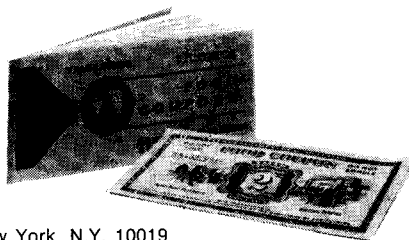
Their diets are so inadequate that hunger and malnutrition have become part of their lives. Many children of tenant farmers and seasonal workers have actually never known what it is like *not* to be hungry.

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grapes; the center image is St. Basil bedeviled by a swarm of sputniks. Food is brought by a crumpled waiter. It consists of six husky sausages, brown bread, and vodka in a skinny tall glass.

Last night's staccato melee seems better now after vodka. There had been ten intimidating visits by night birds in billed caps. They came to sell us transit visas through Poland (\$4.20) and Germany (\$2.40), to check visas, to return change, to kick our suitcases. The constant checking goes on in the faded morning light. It creates ambience. The waiter returns to collect \$1.70 for sausages and vodka and is tipped—a violation of Russian train manners. We have transformed him into a collaborator. He checks the hall and mounts our suitcase barricade and slams the door. In no-language, it is understood that he wants to sell us rubles. And we sell our freedom from fear at three to one. The hooded faces are due again tonight at the Russian border. Our innocence is gone.

"Meal," extracted from the Russian menu in Russian, is borscht (omnipresent), choice of eel, fish salad under an igloo of gelatin, or steak tartare. Main course is steak, breaded veal, or pork chop, with a landslide of potatoes and a pile of canned peas. Dessert is a glass of red liquid with floating cherries. We drink a lot of vodka. We pay \$4.50 for two. It will become clearer that only coupons or hard currency can be used. No one, especially Russians, seems to want rubles.

At Brest, the frontier, thick, fat women customs guards clamber on board. What interests them are our magazines, which through their eyes are no longer vapid but sensual and decadent. They look under our bunks with a flashlight and bang against the brown walls. Then come the giant men to rip open our beds and look under the carpet. They count all our currency, piece by piece, writing down the serial numbers of single dollar bills. Again and again, questions about books, and jewels. Our rubles are in an open toilet kit below the mirror reflecting tubes and razors. Fright cottons my mouth; my husband controls his laugh badly. These are monuments, not men. Fear scurries up the corridors, infecting everyone. Fear is part of being a tourist in Russia.

Picture Province



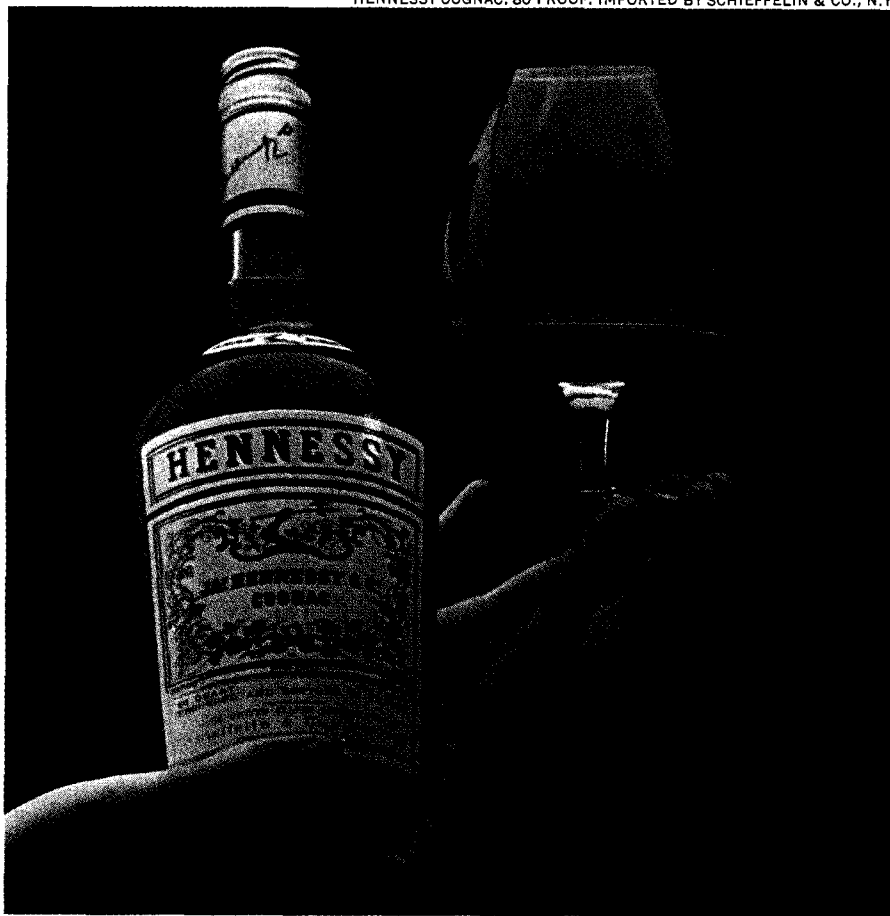
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A-4

Snow twists around the guards who stand outside our window as we are questioned. Tiers of lights, as if for a night game, blast down on the train. The square where we are stopped looks like an altar. At the top is a beige building half-hidden by a giant billboard of Lenin's face. Naked bulbs surround the poster like a stage mirror. Other scarlet posters of united workers, two stories high, are the only color in the square, filled with drifted snow. There is no sound within the train except for the slight patient rustling of things being put back into suitcases. Not a word in the aftermath of fear.

We back and glide along the black tracks, attaching ourselves to other cars by hitting them hard and sticking. We stagger and fall across our suitcases and disrupted beds. There is no joking, just a grim rebalancing.

I feel a criminal now. Dostoevsky was right about "Crime and Punishment." Why would I be willing to accept punishment from these people when I would think nothing of trying to put one over on my own customs? Maybe their earnestness.

Now they are changing the wheel gauge of our cars. Some say that the large gauge was to stop invasion by foreign railroads; others, that in measuring the tracks in Europe, the outside measurement was mistakenly used as the inside measurement. Error is never admitted. Two hydraulic elevators, like those in a garage, lift our coach ten feet up in the air, leaving behind the underbody and wheels. These are slid out and a new, wide-footed body is slid in. The train looks bizarre floating against the sky flanneled with snow.

The sandwich that returns with my husband, who had gone to change money, has an interesting aspect. The gray-beige bread is thicker than our green-striped mattresses; the cheese looks waxen and tastes embalmed, and sliced maroon sausage crouches on it. The exchange had been calibrated with an abacus at an Intourist bank. Abacuses are used everywhere, with the sound of slapping.

The train moves on, jumbling across the wider tracks, and the arc lights are cut off by an invisible hill. In a moment the clock changes by two hours, underlining the border between Poland and Russia.

A morning and an afternoon later we are in Moscow, squat, sprawling,



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and thick. The high-domed station is cluttered with passengers bundled up and eating from their suitcases. Here are representatives of each of the one hundred and ten nationalities and ethnic groups, in various forms of drabness, waiting to go or be sent to Siberia. All the countries of Europe, all of the United States, including Alaska, could be lost in Siberia, and there would still be 300,000 miles to spare. At ten o'clock every morning a train leaves for the empty lands, where, when it is really cold, the circling magpies freeze in midair and fall like rocks.

Our guide mechanically matches our tickets to our compartment, and the magenta train mechanically starts. The stubby city passes by. Inside there is nothing new. There is nothing new to anyone in this country. Continuousness is the thing.

A man selling yogurt passes our compartment carrying thick green bottles. Another follows with tin pots of soup. I dissect my bowl of it: capers the size of olives, dill pickle slices, sausage rounds, kidney, onion, lemon slice, ripe olives, solid pig fat, beet bits. The wash I see is sour cream and pottage broth.

It is night on the train, ten fifteen Ural Mountain Time outside, two hours earlier inside, since the train remains on Moscow time. This results in the stranding of passengers, but that is not a concern in a nation of 300 million. Loudspeakers follow the ice hockey match between Russia and Czechoslovakia. Hidden under the table between the beds there is a dial that regulates individual sound. In the hall, the sounds of the game rage under the doors.

In the hall is also the bathroom. Through the hole of the plugless washbasin the tracks cut black lines through the snow. As the cold water (there is only cold water, but with a choice of tap) exits from the iron basin, steam pushes its way up through the drain. Down below, it is minus sixty on a night that is called by four in the afternoon. Squares of *Pravda* are frozen-glued to the toilet bowl and flutter in the updrafts. There is no toilet paper, only cropped squares of newspaper from a nail on the wall. The room is brown and serves the whole carriage. Men in pajamas wait in the hallways watching the abstract of the ice crystals on the window against a field of black sky, black

snow, and invisible black shacks. The loudspeaker, alert at all hours, announces the statistics of a town passed, its agricultural and production surpluses, and the local worker hero of the year.

Food is a necessity, not an entertainment, and there is a militant will to survive in the lines on either side of the dining car. We stand with Cosacks in brown felt boots, women in babushkas, bundled children. To enter too late in the day means there are no traces of meat and fish among the bread and potatoes.

We had consumed all the caviar and champagne after the second day. There is chicken, skinny, with fatty hide stretched across bone frame, or stroganoff, chunks of brown texture under a blanket of sour cream surrounded by damp fried potatoes. There is ever borscht. To eat once a day is to wage war against the elements and the other warriors. To reach the place of eating (dining car is an inadequate translation), the ice sealing the doors must be shattered with a kick, and the second door on the other side of the open space kicked more carefully because of the platform of ice below one's boots. So we, and most of the others, eat once at three o'clock, when hunger pains are best cut between day and night. The car of eating has eight community tables, where the kitchen staff and the two waitresses and the yogurt man sleep on tablecloths at night.

Some people, mostly the poorer, who could be called serfs had we not been told there are no longer serfs, run from the train during the one hundred and one short station breaks for Braque-like smoked herring, twisted bread buttered with chocolate, or the satin-striped meat at the kiosks. They eat slowly as if addicted, throughout the pale days and endless black nights, as ice scales their windows.

In this classless society there is no first or second class; there is "hard" and "soft" class. We know we are in "soft" class because of the blue aluminum walls, green silk curtains, and patterned carpet runners that have survived a thousand voyages across Siberia, and because our companions wear military clothes or carry books on engineering and live in four-berth containers. "Hard" class carriages were manufactured only ten years ago, and each compartment has

two tiers of three bunks each. Russians take things too far.

The train people amuse themselves by compartment-hopping. A bold cherub of a man fills our door. His pajamas are gray-striped like all the others in the train. We explain with our hands and point out words in our bilingual dictionary. Conversation deepens as his bottle of vodka shallows. The man emerges as Yacob Zuskin, going to Sverdorsk to open his play *Hello Warsaw*. He has written ten movie and ten theater scripts. He makes \$2500 for each script plus 3 percent of the gross. Tickets average one ruble, or about a dollar. He lives with other writers in a cooperative apartment house in Moscow. His passport is brought out in our "show and tell": Zuskin, Yacob; writer; Jew. He says that his wife's passport has Ukrainian as a nationality. His nationality is Jew. Our dictionary translates his life lightly. His apartment has three rooms. He will go with his wife to Osaka with \$100 spending money from the government.

I find "defect" on page 57 of my dictionary. But he is part of the state and if amputated, would die. He, like all the others, except for handpicked businessmen and embassy staffs knows no language but Russian.

I dream at night through the shattering bouncing of the train that destroys sleep but does not awaken. I am bruised from the forcing of frozen doors and from wooden beds. I forget there is more world outside. The dimness dilutes at ten, and today is Central Asia. On the horizon the body steam of Russia is deep gray like an oncoming hurricane as the dampened air is frozen still in places too heavy to rise. The only other foreigner on the train, an expert on Alaska, says it is called temperature inversion. The trees look as if they were in full summer bloom, with fluffy leaves made of stuck snow. Atop every tenth frozen tree sits a magpie, spear-tailed, with a white shield of a breast on its black body, and every house we pass has a birdhouse atop a high pole. The people outside walk about like astronauts, stiff-armed and stiff-legged under layers of clothes. Some ride in sleds, lying flat down to avoid the cutting wind. The sun is white, not a tint of warmth in its noncolor. Most of the trees are silver birches with silver limbs and silver snow leaves. The houses have corrugated iron roofs.

The farmers put their haystacks on the roofs to keep in the warmth. Any pipe would burst, so women carry the water in two buckets on a wooden yoke.

I get out at many of the stops. It is minus fifty at noon now. Shortly, it is hard to turn my eyes, and the station and the red train and the people look misty. My hearing goes dim, and my nostrils appear to freeze. My feet and hands cease to exist.

At each stop, everyone's clothes are identical: fur hats with ear flaps, big felt boots surrounding abundantly wrapped legs, cocoons of hunched gray coats. Each wooden house is the same size and shape. There is the same food in every station. All of the country moves with the same stride. No town is without its factory. Each is a woodcut repeated again and again on the snow. Outsiders are pattern-disturbers, apostates who do not know the true religion.

At night all the factories are floodlit. They are the theaters where the dramas are being enacted. The train's loudspeaker narrates each one with a triumphant symphony.

We are now one hundred miles from the border of China, and the houses have changed. The shutters are shades of peacock, aquamarine, and indigo, carved in fanciful geometric lines. For the first time, we see sharp-hipped cows, blinking over the blue fences. The snow has lessened, and I can see honey-colored grasses. The trees are all pines on the hills, which bound across the horizontal. Earth comes out from under, looking anemic.

Every station has a statue, Lenin alternating with a sportsman. This time it is a runner. We have already passed a swimmer, a hockey player. Outside they now sell sunflower seeds.

At 6:25 the train arrives at Khabarovsk. Exactly 6:25. During nine days, our arrivals have been precise—or has there been a comrade who changes the station clocks to coincide with the train's arrival? Tomorrow we board a third train that goes straight south, downhill on the globe to Vladivostok.

We have crossed Siberia. On the platform, the pavement rocks in the absence of motion. An Intourist guide approaches to herd us away. We and the others are led out of sight from the train.



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MOVIES

VIOLENCE ENSHRINED

by David Denby

There have been very few great directors in movie history who were totally unconcerned with physical violence (Robert Bresson is one), although several have been good at violence without being drawn to it as a subject. Jean Renoir and Orson Welles, for instance, clearly are not very interested in violence per se, but when the subject calls for it, they can do splendid things—take, for example, the hunting party and the alternately farcical and tragic shootings in Renoir's *Rules of the Game* and the somber battle in the mud in Welles's *Falstaff*.

Some genres and directors have treated violence thematically: the American silent comedies, with their kinesthetic virtuosity, were often amazingly brutal; D. W. Griffith and Sergei Eisenstein produced some of their greatest effects with battles, mob scenes, and moments of individual terror; the slick and fast American gangster films of the thirties, as well as the Western, depended almost totally on violence for their very real aesthetic success; and recently a host of brilliant films by men like Roberto Rossellini, Akira Kurosawa, Gillo Pontecorvo, Arthur Penn, and Sam Peckinpah have been completely explicit about wounds, explosions, dismemberment, and death. This list serves only to reaffirm the point that violence, even excessive violence, is often an essential element in great movie art; no doubt we all realize this, although we reserve the right to complain about specific movies.

Many people drew the line at *The Wild Bunch*, the Sam Peckinpah Western released in the summer of 1969, one of the bloodiest features of the entire decade. It was also one of the best—perhaps, after *Bonnie and Clyde*, the most brilliant—American films of the 1960s. What proved to be so disturbing about *The Wild Bunch* was the director's ambivalence about all that mayhem; he made it shocking, obscene, and painful, yet he also showed that for those dealing it out (principally the bunch itself), it amounted to a kind of higher sensual

experience in comparison to which all other experience hardly seemed to matter. Apart from the loyalty among the outlaws in the bunch, the movie depicted a world of almost total moral corruption (vicious little children ran playfully through its bloodiest scenes like a recurrent nightmare).

Since there were no "good" characters presented for our sympathy, we could only identify with the physical joy of those stupid, useless, and obviously doomed men; the movie seemed to offer support for Hemingway's assertion that if something felt good, it was good.

This was a view that only a moral idiot could accept without qualification (what about the victims?); nevertheless, one momentarily left one's doubts behind, since Peckinpah was working with explosive originality in a genre that was habitually conservative. Like Hemingway, his sense of physical detail was absolute. The masculine rituals of the Western—carousing, whoring, shooting—had never been filmed with so much grimy actuality, so much sweat and obscenity and noise. The tradition of the somnolent, cool, celibate Westerner was laid to rest once and for all. Moreover, the big violent tableaux were visually so complex that the halloved "ritual simplicity" of previous Westerns began to look like an evasion of the medium's possibilities. No one who has seen *The Wild Bunch* will forget its great set pieces—the massacre of a group of temperance marchers caught in the cross fire of two bands of cutthroats; the men and horses gracefully plunging into the water as a blown-up bridge collapses beneath them; the corrupt Mexican general, eager for guns, being spun in circles by a sputtering machine gun held loose from its tripod. Certainly Peckinpah's violence was excessive, but it was never mechanical. By turns comic, horrible, sloppy, balletic, cowardly, heroic, it was the principal means of expressing individual character and style—as sexuality might be for another filmmaker or writer.

Yet despite its brilliance, *The Wild Bunch* wasn't fully under control. One felt this during the final mutual massacre of the *Federales* and the bunch, a perfect but meaningless fantasy of destruction that went on forever and ever. Finally, Peckinpah's superb ballet of death was a bit sickening and more than a bit stupid—never had so much virtuosity been at the service of so few ideas. With the first twinge of nausea, moral doubts and questions returned as well; many viewers forgot their enjoyment of Peckinpah's sensuous rendering of extreme experience and rejected the entire movie as exploitation. This was unfair and ungrateful, but there was no question that if one measured the aesthetic success of violence by the moral and intellectual seriousness of its purpose, Peckinpah's mayhem could not be justified beyond a certain point.

Peckinpah was born in Madera County, California, on the side of a mountain which bears the family name and was first homesteaded by his grandfather. Now forty-six, he prides himself on his knowledge of the West; in interviews he insists that his characters are real, that he has known men like them. Certainly he has the fierceness of some of his protagonists: his legendary intractability has given him a bad name in Hollywood, and on more than one occasion studio higher-ups have spitefully taken control of his pictures away from him during the crucial cutting stage. Yet despite his extreme individuality as a director, Peckinpah came up through the system in a fairly routine way: directing and acting in summer stock and university theaters, working as a dialogue director at Allied Artists, writing and later directing episodes in TV series like *Gunsmoke*, *The Rifleman*, and *The Westerner*.

His first feature film to attract notice was *Ride the High Country* (1962), a leisurely and very beautiful Western with Randolph Scott and Joel McCrea as two old cowboys trying to maintain some semblance of dignity after their days of glory had passed. The tone was largely elegiac, although one startling sequence—a wedding in a brothel—foreshadowed some of the rauchier moments in *The Wild Bunch*. *Major Dundee* followed in 1964, a movie severely mutilated in the cutting, but still remark-

able for the agony and beauty of its battle scenes. During the next five years—until *The Wild Bunch*—the big studios refused to give him work and Peckinpah retreated to television.

After *The Wild Bunch*, he relaxed with *The Ballad of Cable Hogue*, a vacuous and ineffectually humorous account of a mercenary desert rat operating a water hole for profit; the genial ballad style failed at the simplest level as Peckinpah tried to turn his characters into archetypes before he had dealt with them adequately as human beings. It was only in the few scenes of grotesque comic violence that the movie came alive.

Now, with *Straw Dogs*, we have a film which is as brilliant as *The Wild Bunch*, but a lot harder to defend. It is an *apologia* for the violent way of life as well as a full-scale attack on the modern "civilized" personality; it speaks for the value of direct instinctual fulfillment, physical courage and initiative, and the sexual rights of men over women. It insists that violence is part of us all, no matter how deeply buried, and that refusing to acknowledge its presence is a moral failure.

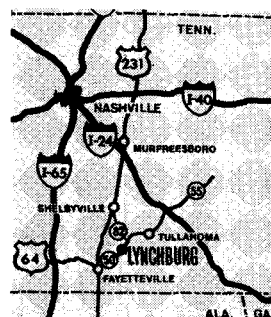
Although Peckinpah's general attitudes turn out to be reactionary to the point of madness, he has never functioned better as a filmmaker: *Straw Dogs* is a hateful but very exciting movie.

The screenplay by the director and David Z. Goodman situates an American mathematics professor (Dustin Hoffman) and his bitchy young British wife (Susan George) in a backward English coastal village in Cornwall. When these two take into their house a demented sexual offender, a pervert loathed by the entire town, the house is set upon by a group of malevolent toughs who have been harassing the young couple all along. In a burst of murderous retaliatory glee, Hoffman becomes as deadly as any rampaging warrior in *The Iliad*; the movie ends with his killing several men, which is seen as both a physical and moral victory for him.

The movie is a demonstration of the necessity to kill. Early on, the mathematician thinks he is above violence, but Peckinpah knows better. He shows us that this weak and timorous man really wants nothing else. There's an eerie fatalism in *Straw Dogs*; it's as if the two opponents—the



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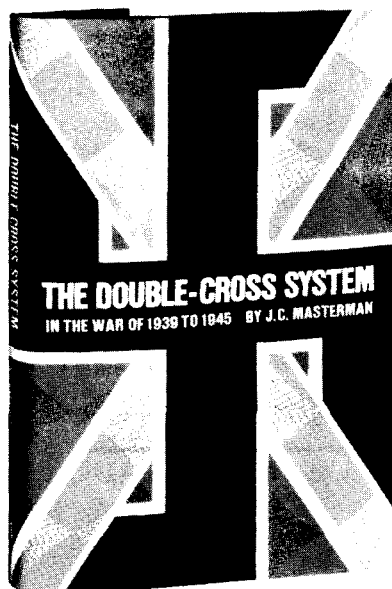
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vicious louts and the young couple—required one another to fulfill some mutual fantasy of destruction. When the crisis finally arrives, they are all tremendously relieved because it's what they've secretly wanted all along.

Of course, this compulsion is really the director's. From the opening moments, everything that happens advances the ultimate confrontation, yet the individual scenes along the way—charged with sexual and physical menace—are written and acted with so much beautiful detail that we never quite reject the plotting as too rigid. Peckinpah is eager to have us believe that the blowout is a natural consequence of character and circumstance.

Hoffman's mathematician is a recognizable type of educated American—boyish, slightly bewildered, accustomed to moderating his instincts through irony and mild self-deprecation. His personality is most at home in the university, where a reserved temper and an offhand emphasis give a modestly acceptable style to the exercise of authority. Peckinpah mercilessly hounds this modern style of dignity until it gives way to an antique harshness and fortitude that he can respect. The mathematician's very diffidence is shown as a provocation: since he won't take brutal charge of his wife, and women are untrustworthy by nature (this was also true in *The Wild Bunch*), he is asking for trouble. In a scene of alternating tenderness and violence which is far more erotic than the strip-and-plunge mechanics of hard-core pornography, the wife is blissfully raped by one of the village toughs, an old boyfriend.

In this sequence Peckinpah uses all the resources of camera placement, cutting, and direction to validate an old dirty joke: he shows that the woman enjoys the savagery of violation, enjoys it more than the playful sex she has with her husband. Even a rotten sexist cliché can be given new life if there's enough conviction behind it; Susan George's slow, accumulating emotion is disturbing because she forces us to accept the hateful old "truth" about rape.

The way the movie is set up, the mathematician can earn back his wife's respect only by acting as violently as the rapist. When he and his wife are under siege, he at first an-

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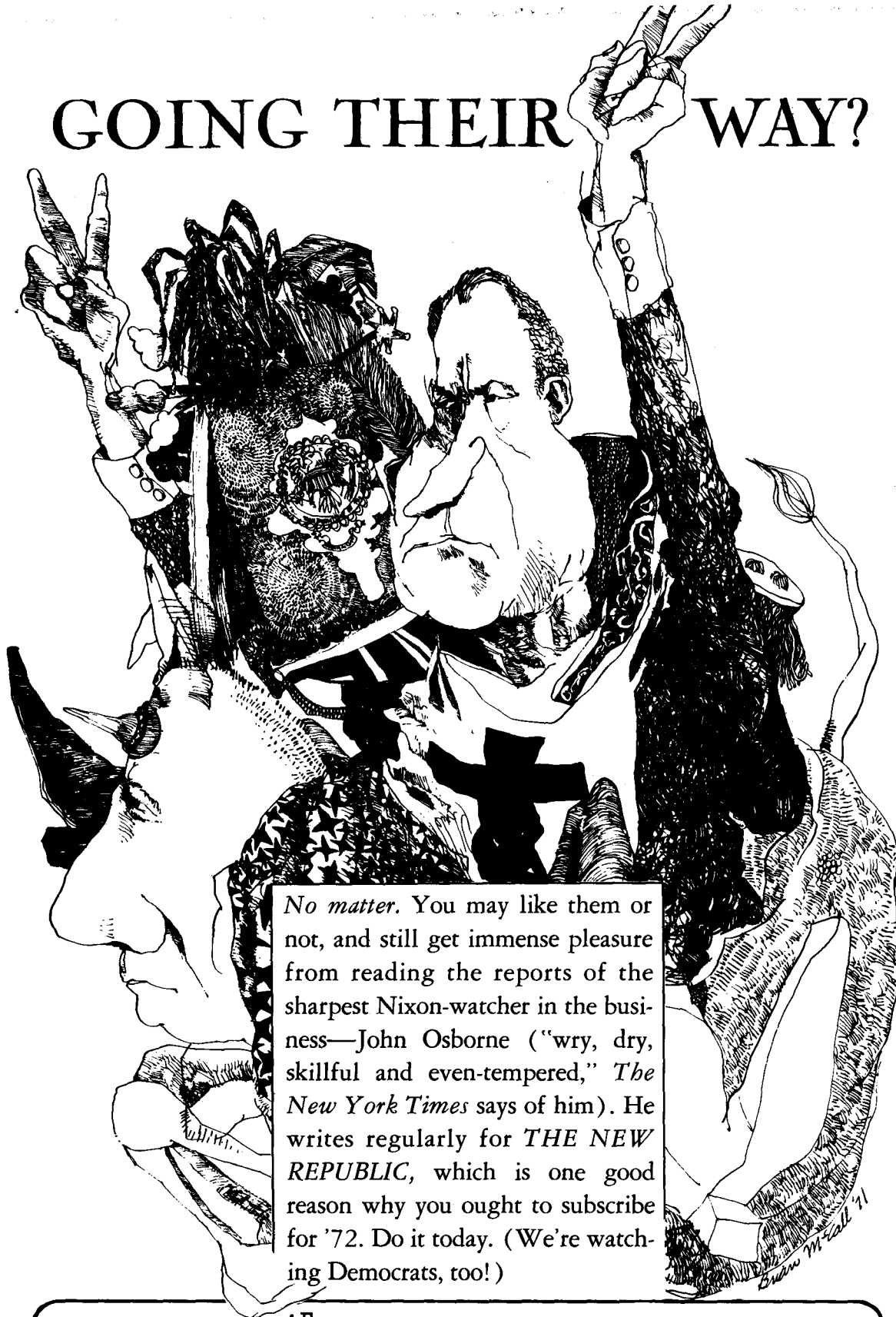
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nounces his principle that he must protect his charge (the poor half-wit) against mob vigilantism, but this soon gives way to a purely personal revenge and an exultation in violence. Racing around the house in a fever of ingenuity and courage, the civilized man throws off his hesitations and ironies and becomes a happy killer. The mayhem that follows—with shotgun, knife, poker, wire, and an ancient steel trap—has all the overwhelming physical immediacy that Peckinpah brings to such scenes.

Thus Peckinpah has domesticated violence, taken it away from the professional killers and given it to the audience; the mathematician is no more than a willing amateur, and we are bound to imagine ourselves in the same situation. Since Peckinpah makes this insidious appeal to us and the film is cast in the form of an argument, we are likely to examine our responses and argue back. The moral idiocy of *The Wild Bunch* (it's all right to kill if you stay loyal to your buddies) was fairly obvious, but the stylized context of the Western allowed us to ignore it. The modern-dress *Straw Dogs*, with its meticulous attention to contemporary styles of personality, presents another case. Can Peckinpah really believe, after all that's happened in this country during the last ten years, that killing makes us men? And although we can admit it's better to fight than run, do we imagine we could kill several times and not pay a heavy psychic price for it? Having gained the truth about himself, hasn't the hero of *Straw Dogs* lost everything else? I don't suppose the director will make a sequel to this movie in which the mathematician loses interest in his work, his wife drifts away again, and their marriage cracks up under the horrible weight of the past.

Violence can be valuable in a movie if it teaches something new about ourselves or other people; or if it serves to express emotions that cannot come out in any other way; or if it satisfies our basic desire for action, movement, power, release; or if it is very beautiful or shockingly ugly. Although Peckinpah accomplishes all of this in his movies, we cannot admire him completely without losing some element of sanity and self-respect. Despite all his efforts, our sense of the tragedy of violence still outweighs his certainty of its glory.

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by Edward Weeks

THE HOUSE OF LIFE:
Rachel Carson at Work
by Paul Brooks
Houghton Mifflin, \$8.95

In *The House of Life* Paul Brooks, Rachel Carson's friend and editor at the close of her career, has written an admirable but guarded account of her life, with special emphasis on her accumulating force as a writer and conservationist; and he has selected from the five books she published and from her fugitive pieces proof that she was as eloquent a marine biologist as William Beebe and more lion-hearted.

Someone once called Miss Carson "a nun of nature." As a very young woman she supported herself and her mother by working for the Bureau of Fisheries in Washington, and on holidays she found her happiness in exploring a beach or a tidal pool and watching the shorebirds she knew so well. In her quiet evenings her mind was stirred by *Moby Dick*, *The Sea and the Jungle* by H. M. Tomlinson, Henry Beston's *Outermost House*, and the stories of an English naturalist, Henry Williamson, who for a time lived as a hermit on the Devon moors. His Hawthornden prize book, *Tarka the Otter*, with its brilliant description of the otter's life on land and in water, became the model for her first book, *Under The Sea-Wind* (1941), in which she chose for her heroes a black skimmer, the mackerel, and the eel. She was not dissuaded by its failure, but her new job in the Fish and Wildlife Service was demanding, and it was not until ten years later, after her research at Woods Hole and the prodding of Will Beebe that she at last captured an international readership with *The Sea Around Us*.

In the office she was a person of light and humor; she brought zest and reverence for life to whatever she did or wrote, and in her imaginative essays on "The Birth of an Island" or "The Clam" or "Our Ever Changing Shore," she blends the feeling of a poet with the observation of a scientist. She was a slow writer, averaging

five hundred words a day, and it was her outrage at what pesticides were doing to the birds she loved—and to how much else?—that provoked her climactic book. The long research, the persistence against grief and illness, and the courage which went into the making of *Silent Spring* Mr. Brooks has told magnificently, with scorn for those who wrote her off as "hysterical" and ignorantly or deliberately refused to acknowledge the folly of drenching this country with DDT. This is a timely book and an earnest one.

THE BOYS OF SUMMER
by Roger Kahn
Harper & Row, \$6.95

One of the younger alumni of the sports page is Roger Kahn, born in Brooklyn and brought up by a father who doted on professional baseball and by a mother who read James Joyce aloud. As the only son of intelligent parents, Roger matured with an ambition to write and with an adoration for the Brooklyn Dodgers. The New York Yankees were then the killers, the conquering Romans, and the Brooklyn Dodgers were the talented, ill-fated Greeks. Thanks to his brilliance as a reporter, in 1952 when he was just twenty-one, Roger Kahn got his heart's desire to cover the Dodgers in training camp and throughout the long season for the *New York Herald Tribune*.

From this experience has emerged his action-charged book, *The Boys of Summer*. One should understand why the Brooklyn team was nicknamed "The Dodgers." Brooklyn is an extensive, flat community which was once served by many trolley cars; to survive, Brooklynites had to dodge the trolleys, so naturally, when the town could afford a professional team, it was called "The Dodgers."

There are three reasons why *The Boys of Summer* is such good reading that it has been chosen by the Book-of-the-Month Club. In the first place, the Dodgers were the first and for a time the only organization in the two leagues to have black players. In

Jackie Robinson they had not only a star but a man of enormous courage and dignity who obeyed the boss: he kept his cool, despite the abuse that was heaped on him; he dodged balls thrown at his head, and the spikes flung at his legs; and by his skill and fortitude he opened the gates for the blacks to come.

Second, the Dodgers' lineup was a mix of new bloods and the old; Pee Wee Reese, the captain, a Southerner who was Jackie Robinson's best friend; Carl Labine, a French Canadian from Woonsocket; Carl Erskine, a Scot, with his great curve; Preacher Roe, old and wily, a hillbilly from the Ozarks; George Shuba, the son of Czechoslovakian refugees; Roy Campanella, "Campy," the great black catcher whom everyone loved and who was to be so tragically crippled. Remarkable men drawn together by a remarkable spirit, and to this kid they spoke with pride of the skills they had mastered, with humor of their misery in defeat.

The final reason is this: years after he had ceased reporting, Roger Kahn tracked down every one of the scattered members of the team and spent time with them learning what they had made of their lives away from the diamond. These chapters of reunion are intimate and reassuring.

SAINTS AND INNOCENCE

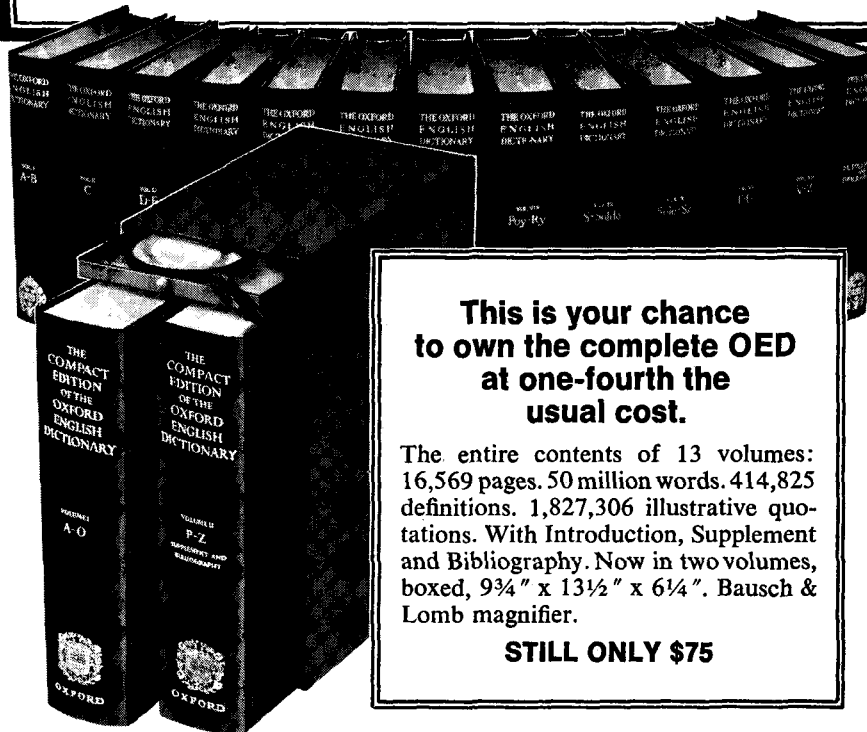
by Barbara Rex
Norton, \$6.95

Philadelphia society has moved out to the suburbs, and however apart their homes may be, whether in Chestnut Hill, Berwyn, or Haverford, there is an interlocking directorate of the old families who observe the proprieties, vote Republican, attend the Devon Horse Show, drink Fish House punch, come in town for festive meals at the Barclay, and speak with an unmistakable accent. This is "the cream of Philadelphia society and the seat of its power!" one of the characters in Barbara Rex's novel proclaims.

Saints and Innocence is the story of the vulnerable marriage between Nora McCarton, an "outsider" who came from Buffalo, and Charley Slade, who is Philadelphia to the core. Nora is of a passionate nature, intelligent and critical, and it was probably her difference as well as her sexuality which attracted Charley when they first met. They spent their

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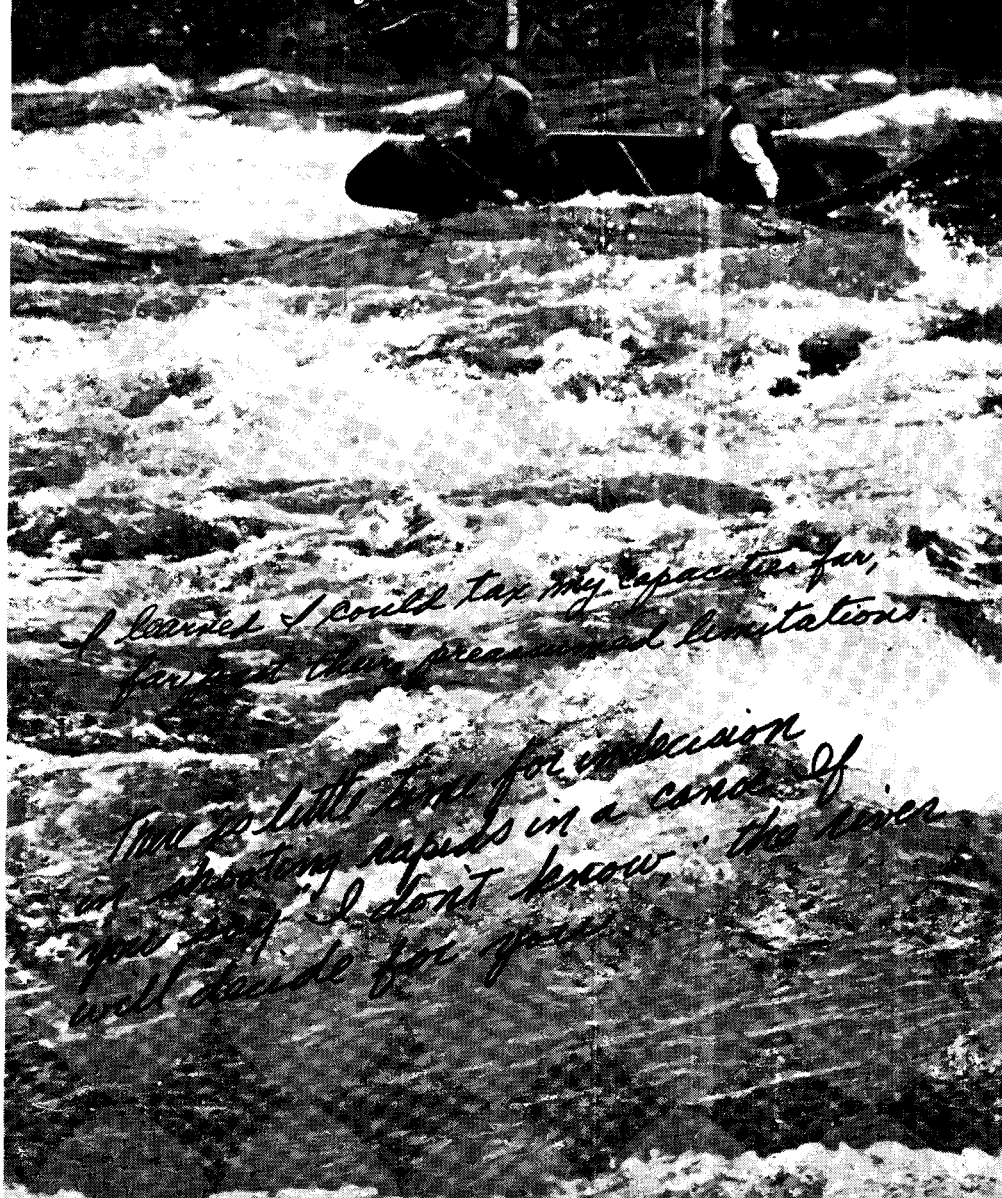
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early years in New York, Charley working on Wall Street, and Nora, when their only daughter, Grace, was in school, proving herself an able editor and bringing home writers and painters who bored Charley stiff. In this cooling-off period she had her first affair, which Charley suspected, and although he said nothing at the time, he felt betrayed. All this, however, is told in retrospect.

The book begins with their return to the protective atmosphere of Philadelphia. Charley is in the ascendancy, president of a trust company, at home in Mount Pleasant, and a pillar of society. The charity over which he presides is a home for unwed pregnant girls, and at Waywards he is attracted to one of the social workers, a young Quaker, no older than his daughter. When Indra comes to spend the summer with Nora and himself, Nora grows jealous of this pale, dark-haired, determined girl who is appropriating her husband, yet she perceives the possibility of divorce long after Charley has embraced it and does not realize that psychologically he is punishing her.

The book is at its best when, angry and aroused, the couple stalk each other while the various members of the family, Charley's wispy, impulsive mother, his wealthy, autocratic aunt, his older brother Ira, the senator from Pennsylvania, and their daughter, Grace, intervene. The women in the book are particularly well drawn, and Waywards, where Charley's idealism leads to something else, is indeed a horror. The shortcomings in the novel are the author's failure to convince us that the marriage was a go at the outset and the implausible ending, but as a story of an impending domestic disaster, her narrative is tense and believable.

THE HINDENBURG

by Michael M. Mooney
Dodd, Mead, \$8.95

Graf Zeppelin, "the crazy count," incurred the disfavor of Kaiser Wilhelm, and in 1894 he won a patent for a dirigible and got in touch with his neighbor Gottlieb Daimler, who was making gasoline-powered engines. The "zeppelins," or dirigibles, as they grew bigger established a good safety record for trans-continental flight. Over nine years the Graf Zeppelin carried more than eigh-

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In his book, *The Hindenburg*, Mr. Mooney adopts the minute-by-minute, hour-by-hour pattern, which has already proved so effective in depicting the sinking of the *Titanic* and the San Francisco earthquake. But in his approach to the disaster which overtook the *Hindenburg* just as she touched down in America, the author fails to arouse our sympathy for the crew or the passengers. He tells us plenty about the history of the other zeppelins, those that flew to South America and those that bombed London in World War I, and he devotes much space, too much in my judgment, to the offstage activity of the victims and survivors of this flight. The research seems painstaking, but whether Rigger Eric Spehl actually planned the explosion at the behest of his girlfriend, Beatrice Friederich, and why, seems to me a mystery and a cold one.

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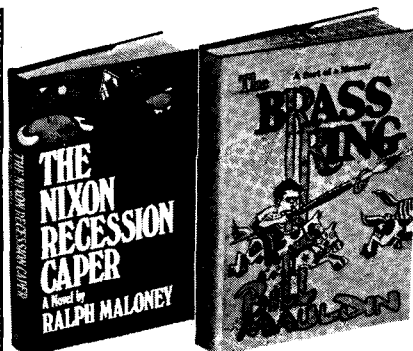
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SHORT REVIEWS: BOOKS

by Phoebe Adams

THE CASE OF THE MIDWIFE TOAD by Arthur Koestler. Random House, \$5.95. Mr. Koestler has given a mystery-story title to what is, in fact, a bit of a mystery. Paul Kammerer (1880–1926) was an Austrian biologist whose experiments with toads and salamanders indicated that acquired characteristics may be inherited. This Lamarckian suggestion infuriated the dominant Darwinians. After years of academic controversy and public excitement, Kammerer's prize specimen—the midwife toad—was proved fraudulent. There was a roaring scandal and Kammerer shot himself. Mr. Koestler's reconstruction of the affair is, however, no simple tale of villainy detected. There had been some very odd doings all along the line in regard to that toad; it had passed competent scrutiny on a number of previous occasions; presumably Kammerer, who incidentally had never claimed that the midwife toad proved anything about acquired characteristics, was framed. Although the puzzle remains unsolved, it makes a fascinating tale, for the biological technicalities are carefully explained to the nonscientific reader, and the bloodless wars for precedence among the biological fraternity are as sly and savage as a Borgias feud.

FOLKLORE ON THE AMERICAN LAND by Duncan Emrich. Little, Brown, \$15.00. Professor Emrich has scooped up everything—proverbs, riddles, sea shanties, ghost stories, cowboy ballads, epitaphs, Buh Rabbit, General Custer, and even George Lyman Kittredge—with magpie glee and stuffed it all into this fat, engaging book. There is much scholarship underlying the fun, but fun is what counts—the pleasure of meeting language as she is spoke.

NOT TO DISTURB by Muriel Spark. Viking, \$4.95. In this macabre cross between Webster and Wodehouse, the reader is introduced to the servants' hall of a luxurious villa where the Baron is about to hold a small erotic massacre in the library, with such suitably Gothic side effects as a

thunderstorm and a lunatic in the attic. The staff, well aware of what impends, is efficiently making arrangements to peddle inside accounts of the tragedy to the gossip press, film companies, book publishers et al. There is no thought of preventing the violence, merely of how to profit by it. The book's structure is deliberately, even ostentatiously, cinematic in that settings, clothes, actions, and dialogue are given in great detail, while the thoughts of the characters can only be inferred. The whole arrangement suggests that Mrs. Spark is getting at some statement about the power of popular entertainment media to shape the events of real life, but the notion is never more than implied and the book ends by resembling a crystal, glittering but impenetrable, which may be exactly what the author intended.

INTIMATE BEHAVIOUR by Desmond Morris. Random House, \$6.95. The author of *The Naked Ape* theorizes that all human gestures of affection derive from the hugging and patting bestowed on infants. He has no formal proof, all his observations being frankly just the way he sees things, but his interpretation is consistent and sometimes very persuasive. Why, for example, does one pat a dog but stroke a cat?

THE MENDELSSOHNs by Herbert Kupferberg. Scribner's, \$8.95. Besides the composer Felix, the Mendelssohn family included a philosophical grandfather of international reputation and a proliferation of scholars, bankers, and distinguished connections. Felix and his music, about which Mr. Kupferberg is very knowledgeable, are the central point of an interesting group biography running from rags to riches and halfway back.

THE BOOK OF SKULLS by Robert Silverberg. Scribner's, \$5.95. Mr. Silverberg, who writes well and has produced science fiction and several good books on Indian history and archaeology, has rather inexplicably turned out a novel about four undergraduates wild-goose chasing after a mysterious monastic sect somewhere around Phoenix, Arizona. As long as the fellows are on the road, the dusty facts of travel and the subtle grating of temperaments (the four are roommates but not really friends) keep up

interest. When they find the House of Skulls, the reader is stuck with a bargain-basement Shangri-la.

SIX CAME FLYING by Marquis MacSwiney of Mashanaglass. Knopf, \$6.95. Since the Marquis is a waterfowl nut, addicted to keeping ducks and geese, the arrival of wild swans in the moat threw him into an ecstasy of delight and also of alarm, for swans are large birds and not necessarily amiable. His account of his dealings with the flotilla is an exceptionally charming and amusing record of bird watching.

MORTAL CONSEQUENCES: A HISTORY FROM THE DETECTIVE STORY TO THE CRIME NOVEL by Julian Symons. Harper & Row, \$6.95. Himself a writer of clever mysteries, Mr. Symons knows the field from pre-Poe to the present. He is a sharp-witted critic with interesting ideas and a knack with useful quotations, and he is so thorough that his work demands of the amateur reader an interest equal to that of the professional author.

FREE THE MALE MAN! by Shepherd Mead. Simon & Schuster, \$5.95. Not as funny as it ought to be, but this deadpan protest scores some comic points. Mr. Mead observes that boys are born weaker than girls, more subject to inherited defects, more susceptible to disease, and with a shorter life-span, but are nevertheless put to hard labor and kept at it until they die of ulcers. The poor enslaved creatures need help and should welcome it from any source, which at present seems to be the women's liberation group. When a sandhog finds a girl clamoring for his job, he ought, in short, to surrender it with gratitude.

SUICIDE by Jacques Choron. Scribner's, \$7.95. Mr. Choron never explains suicide except on the level where no explanation is needed, but he offers a great deal of information about how the act has been viewed in various cultures and the theories concerning it evolved by assorted schools of philosophy and psychiatry. A kind of intellectual history of the problem, and some of it quite surprising.

ROME by Stewart Perowne, with photographs by Edwin Smith. Coward, McCann & Geohegan, \$17.95. By a miracle of intelligent condensation,

Mr. Perowne has reduced 2500 years of history, plus descriptions of the artistic works of the period, to a short, lucid, pleasantly readable text. As guide for the newcomer or nostalgia for the veteran traveler, this is a lovely book and beautifully illustrated.

HENRY JAMES by Leon Edel. Lippincott, \$12.95. The fifth and final volume of Mr. Edel's exhaustive biography of James covers the years from 1901 to 1916.

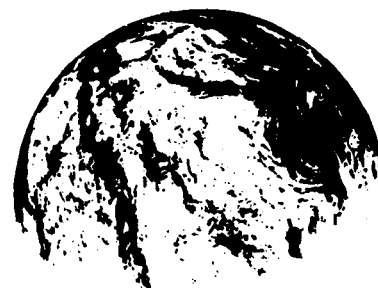
WILD FLOWERS OF THE UNITED STATES, Volume 5, by Harold William Rickett. New York Botanical Garden, McGraw, Hill, \$57.50. The flowers of the Northwestern states, meaning Washington and Oregon west of the Cascade Range and California southward to the deserts, are pictured and described in these two fine books. Like the previous volumes in the series, this is a dazzling example of learning, organization, and superb bookmaking.

THE INLAND SEA by Donald Richie. Weatherhill, \$6.95. Full of affection for the intricate simplicities of old Japan, Mr. Richie prowls the inland waters, collecting lively vignettes and indulging in rather too much subjective melancholy. He is the kind of writer who is most eloquent when he is complaining, which means that a new wallboard-and-plastic tourist hotel which he never visited makes a stronger impression on the reader than more agreeable items which he actually saw. This is a backhanded way to write a travel book, and the author deserves considerable credit for the mixture of fact and charm which he maintains against the odds of his own temperament. Photographs by Yoichi Midorikawa.

FRIDAY NIGHT IN THE COLISEUM by Geoff Winningham. Allison Press, \$7.95 and \$17.50; distributed by Light Impressions. Material from Mr. Winningham's photographic and word-of-mouth account of Texas wrestling appeared in the March *Atlantic*.

800,000,000: THE REAL CHINA by Ross Terrill. Atlantic-Little, Brown, \$7.95. This book grew out of Mr. Terrill's *Atlantic* articles about his seven-week tour of China.

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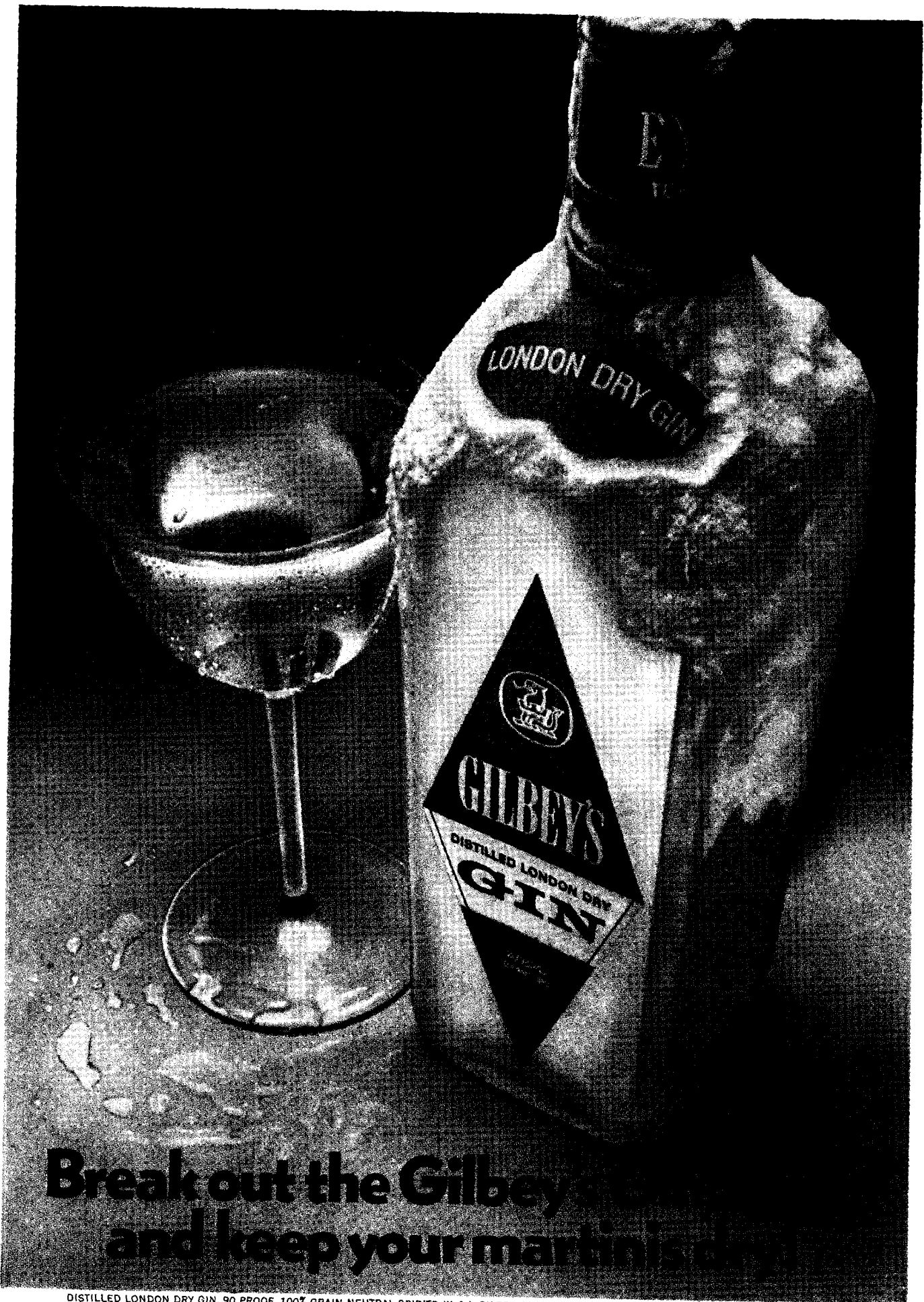
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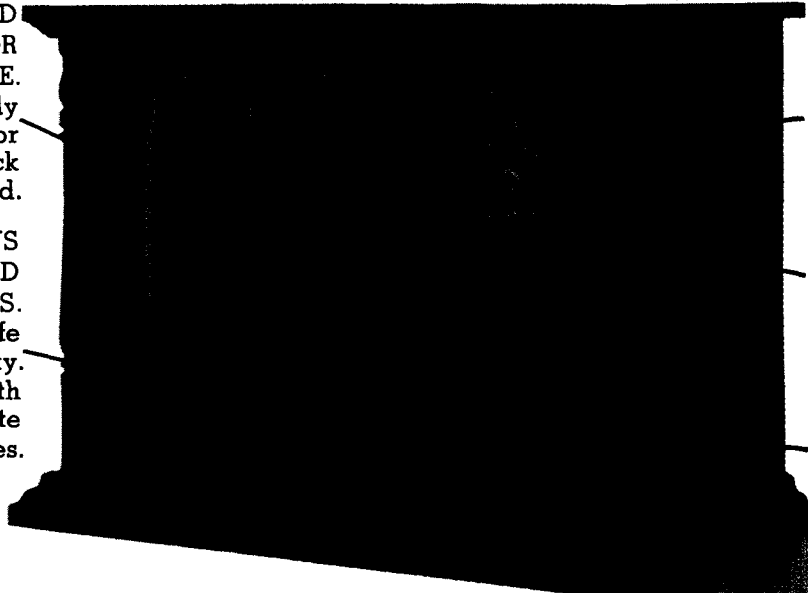
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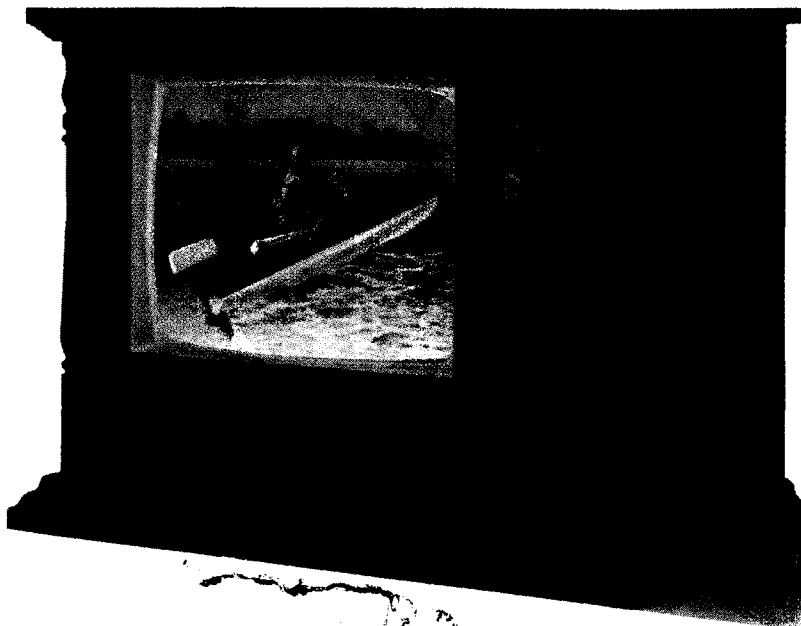
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